

HISTORICAL RELATION

Of the Late

General Assembly,

Held at

EDINBURGH,

From Octob. 16. to Nov. 13. In the Year 1690.

IN A

LETTER

From a PERSON in

EDINBURGH,

To his Friend in

LONDON.

John Cockburn F.R.S.

LICENSED April the 20th. 1691.

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THE NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES

LETTER

FROM
EDINBURGH.TO
ONE in LONDON, &c.

SIR,

I Received yours; and do not think it strange, that those of *England* are so desirous to know the Acts and Proceedings of our General Assembly in *Scotland*; for not only Curiosity but Interest may prompt them thereto: I will readily serve you in this Matter, and intended, though you had not required it, to have given you an Account of it, that you might have Occasion of gratifying your worthy Friends and Acquaintance. It's true, I was not Eye-Witness of what pass'd for you know my Circumstances would not allow that; and the Brethren (as they call themselves) endeavour'd to keep out all that were not of their own party, or who might tell Tales; forbidding the Keepers of the door to admit any without a leaden Ticket in the shape of a Heart, which was the Pass given them, which was not so easily obtain'd, except for their particular Friends; and if any of the *Episcopal Party* were discovered, there was a Cry presently, *Conformists are here*; and the Officers were sent to thrust them out. However notwithstanding of this strictness, there were always two or three discreet and intelligent Persons of my Acquaintance present at

every Session, from whom I have what I write to you. And I assure you that you may trust the Ingenuity and Faithfulness of the Relation. But before I come to the Assembly it self, there be some things previous to it which you ought to be informed of. A General Assembly in *Scotland* (you know) is much of the same Nature with the Convocation in *England*, or a National Council, and of no less Authority here: Nay, our Presbyterians exalt the Authority of their Assemblies above that of King or Parliament; and there be some standing Acts of their Assemblies against Acts of Parliament, and which discharge Obedience to them: Whereupon our Presbyterians being not content with what the Parliament had done for them, nor thinking their Authority sufficient for setting up their Government; they required a General Assembly, by whose Authority (which with them is supreme, and next to that of Jesus Christ) their Government might be firmly established, and all their Actings and Proceedings ratified and approved by it. Yet they knew that a free Assembly of the Clergy and Laity throughout the Kingdom would rather defeat than advance their Design; therefore they consider'd how they might prevent that by some Method, which would exclude all who were not well affected to their Interest, or zealous for the Good Old Cause.

In order hereunto they prevailed with the Parliament, to lodge the whole Government and Management of Church Affairs in the hands of those few Old Preachers who went off when Episcopacy was reestablished *1661.* and such as should be admitted and approved by them. When these Ministers of the Episcopal Persuasion who had complied with the present Civil Government heard this, they thought themselves injured, and therefore addressed to the Parliament to be admitted to a share of the Government, or at least not to be absolutely subjected to them, who were their stated and professed Enemies. This they claimed as due to them, not only upon the account of their being Lawful Ministers of the Gospel, but also upon the account of the publick Faith, which promised them Protection upon their compliance with the Civil Government: Notwithstanding which, their Petition was disdainfully rejected, and the

the Act continued as before, in favour only of the above-mentioned Presbyterian Preachers. By which means all the present Episcopal Clergy and such of the Laity as favoured their Interest, and had complied with them, were rendered incapable of bearing any Office in the Kirk, and of Sitting and Voting in their Meetings. This the Episcopal Party justly complained of, and said; That though Episcopacy was abolished merely upon an unjust and false Pretence, that that Government exercised Tyranny over the Church, yet now a real Presbyterian Tyranny was established, that instead of Fourteen Bishops Sixty were set up, who would Lord it over their Brethren more imperiously than they either did or pretended to do; and that Presbyters were subjected to them who own'd themselves to be no more than Presbyters, which had no Precedent in the Catholick Church, but also they who could not be denied to be Lawful Ministers were excluded from any share of the Discipline and Government of the Church; which was contrary to the very Principles and Tenets of the Presbyterians themselves, who make every private Minister to be invested with the Authority of ruling as well as of teaching; and who affirm it unlawful for any Minister to part with that Right; and who therefore were wont to exclaim against Bishops, because they seemed to usurp it wholly to themselves. All the Excuse made for this was, That they could no otherwise make their Government *sure*, and that the Episcopal Party deserved to be thus treated for their Apostacy, in betraying and renouncing the true Rights and Interests of the Church by complying with Episcopacy. Hence it was infer'd that Presbyterians do juggle both with God and Man: For whereas they would have the World believe, that their Model of Government and Form of Discipline are so much of Divine Right that they can submit to no Terms of Composition with Men about them; so when it makes for their Interest, they can without any scruple introduce essential Alterations thereof: For Parity, which they make the Institution of Christ, was now taken away, and out of the pretended exigence of the Church nine hundred Ministers were suspended from one half of that Power given them

by Christ, which at other times is said to be so essential to them that they cannot be Ministers of the Gospel without it.

Shortly after the passing that Act of Parliament, for setting up the Presbyterian Government, and committing the Care and Management thereof to these few surviving Presbyterian Ministers, who had not complied with Episcopacy; there was a Meeting at *Edinburgh* of Presbyterian Ministers and Lay-Elders to advise about the Affairs of the Kirk, and to lay down Methods how a General Assembly should be call'd and constituted; because (as I have observed) one could not be had according to their minds, after the old manner and standing Rules of General Assemblies. By Virtue of the Act of Parliament, none had the Right to meddle with the Government and Affairs of the Church, but such Ministers as had been removed by the restoration of Episcopacy; and certainly these men were greatly overseen when they parted with that Privilege, and admitted others to share with them before they had seled the Church according to their minds: For by these means they were overpower'd and outvoted, and forced to yield to other things than what they first intended; but they were not sensible of this their Errour till it was past remedy. First, the remnant of the Remonstrator Party, who had been actually deposed in the time of Presbytery, and some of them for scandalous and gross Crimes, came to sit in this Meeting; they were very active and useful, and therefore it was thought fit to receive them; but some being sensible of the Irregularity of admitting Persons lying under the sentence of Deposition by their own Kirk, it was therefore moved that the Sentence of Deposition might be first taken off: But the Debate was laid aside and suppress'd, because these men urg'd and pressed that their Sentence of Deposition might be declared void and null, being done *Clave errante*, by a Factious party; wherewith some of the old Publick Resolutioners were pricked, and therefore proceeded to defend themselves, and particularly one Mr. *Alexander Pitcarne* protested against their Proceedings, and threatned to print his Protestation, and to declare their Meeting unlawful, while such incapacitated Members were allowed

to sit in it: But such early Heats being unseasonable and prejudicial, they prevail'd with him to take up his Protestation and to forbear the Publishing it. Into this Assembly also were received all these younger Brethren, who had been admitted to the Ministry clandestinely in the time of the last Reign, or avowedly and openly since the receiving their Indulgence from King James. These were hurried on with more Fierceness and Zeal than the former, who indeed wanted not sincerity and concernment enough for the Cause.

*Gelidus tardante Senectâ
Sanguis hebet, frigentque effusa in corpore Vires.*

The Old Men thought that they ought to rule, and bear the greatest Sway because of their Age and Experience, and that the Act of Parliament was especially in their favours; but the younger Brethren would not be impos'd upon, seeing Parity was the Constitution of their Government. And it was said that one Mr. Webster told Mr. Gilbert Rule very bluntly, that tho he was a younger Man he merited more than he, having taken the Ministry upon him in the time of Persecution, when no temporal * Interest did encourage him to it; whereas the other entred into it in the time of Peace, and deserted it in time of Trouble.

* *Except the Contributions of the Sisters, which were something to one who knew no other ways how to live.*

Mr. Gabriel Cunningham was chosen Moderator of this Meeting, which was extraordinary as to its Nature, neither was there a proper Name for it; For it was neither Session, Presbytery, Provincial, nor Diocesan Synod, nor General Assembly, nor Commission of the Kirk, which are all the Church Judicatures ever have been since the Reformation; but ever since it bears the Name of the General Meeting. Here they appointed Ministers for the several Corners of the Country, divided them into Presbyteries, prescrib'd the Rules of trying Episcopal Ministers, and ordained that where the Presbytery consisted but of four or fewer, the next Presbytery should be joyned to it, which yet in many places made not a competent number for so weighty a business, as the examining and censuring Ministers for

for their Doctrine and Manners : For the two Presbyteries of *Hidingtoun* and *Dumbar*, where (you know) there be near thirty Parishes, consisted but of five Presbyterian Ministers. There was the like number in the Presbyteries of *Dunse* and *Churnside*, where there were about as many Parishes. In the Presbytery of *Anghterarder* there was but one Presbyterian Minister, and when the next was joyn'd to it, they made but three ; so that when it was debated in the Assembly, whether one of them, towit Mr. *William Spence* (of whom you will hear more afterward) should go for *Angus* ; they pleaded against his going, because that without him they could not have a *Quorum* in the Country where he then lived ; and at the same time Sir *Colin Campbell* and *Ardbruchill* stood up and said, in the face of the Assembly, that for twenty Miles Westward of *Perth*, there were but two or three Ministers, meaning these of the Presbyterian Perswasion, which shews how little agreeable either their Persons or Government are to the People.

Here also they laid down the Method and Manner of constituting the next Assembly, which was to sit in *October*, viz. That where a Presbytery consisted of eight Ministers, they should send four Ministers and three ruling Elders to the Assembly ; where they were under eight and above four, three Ministers and two ruling Elders ; four should send two Ministers and one ruling Elder ; and where there was but one, that one and a ruling Elder should come : By which you see that the old Method of constituting General Assemblies was quite alter'd, and that as many Parts of the Kingdom were not allowed Representatives in that Assembly, so others were not represented equally, nor could they bear a suitable Proportion therein ; but the smalness of their number was admitted as a defence for this Irregularity. At this Meeting they appointed a General Fast before the sitting down of the Assembly, to be kept on Sunday the 5th. of *October*, which was the third Fast had been observed on Sundays within the space of a Year, which is neither agreeable to the Nature of the day, nor the Practice of the Primitive Times ; but our Presbyteri-

ans are above these things; they have more regard to the Practice of their own Predecessors, than either to Reason or Antiquity; and you know it was the Custom of the old Presbyterians to keep all their Fasts on the Lords day: At this time also we had another instance, whereby they shewed themselves the true Sons of their Fathers, who did not confine themselves to Matters purely Ecclesiastical, but who also were always catching at the Power of the Magistrate; whose Priviledg it is in this Kingdom to license Books, and in their Licences to grant the Monopoly of them: This Privilege was assumed by the General Meeting; For they order'd an old Treatise of ruling Elders to be reprinted by the Heirs of *Andrew Anderson*, and discharged any other to meddle therewith; This is the Form of their Licence word for word.

The General Meeting of Ministers and Elders of this Church have appointed this Treatise of Ruling Elders and Deacons to be Printed by the Heirs of Andrew Anderson and none other. Extracted by

JOHN SPALDING, Clerk.

This was a small Beginning, however the Privy Council thought fit to take notice thereof, and to give a check to these Encroachments on the Civil Power, and therefore order'd the Copies to be call'd in, and the Licence to be torn away; so that after the first day all the Copies were sold without the *Imprimatur*; and two Friends of mine (who otherwise cared not for the Book) were forced to pay a triple rate for one with the forementioned Licence, which was a new Proof of the Presbyterian Usurpation.

After the Meeting the Brethren went home, and fell to their work with all their might, according to the Instructions given them in their General Meeting. It was expected that they would first have planted the Churches made vacant by the Council and the Rabble, which were more than could be supplied by all the Ministers of that Perswasion: But they were not so zealous to plant, as to pluck up what was already planted; they would!

would not begin to build, until what was already built was overthrown to the Ground. More than a third part of the Churches in the Kingdom wanted Ministers, and the most of them for more than a Year. But as if that was only a small matter, it was overlooked; and all Pains and Care laid out in emptying these Churches where the Episcopal Ministers continued to preach. Their beloved *West* was destitute of Ministers, the Churches there and in *Galloway* were almost all shut up. So that when the Assembly met, two Ministers declared before them, that where they liv'd there was not so much as the face of a Church, there being no Ministers but themselves and one other: Yet none were sent thither, but they shew'd greater Inclination to seat themselves in the *Lothians* and *South*, which is indeed a better Country, but where there was less room for them, and where they were not so acceptable to the People. Many were indeed astonished at this, nor could they either justify it, or well understand the Politick thereof. Strange! there were already more Churches vacant, than there were Presbyterian Ministers to put in them, and yet so many more were aimed at, and coveted. It was sad and lamentable to see so many desolate Congregations in all parts of the Land, such Multitudes of People without the Gospel, and without the direction of Pastors, and yet they would endeavour to deprive them of this Blessing, who by the good Providence of God had it still continued with them. However they did this either to force the People to joyn with them when none other could be had, or being conscious of their own Ignorance and Inability, they thought it neither fit, nor their Interest to tolerate them who were more judicious, and who would accustom the People to Sense and solid Discourses, which held forth the true Nature and Design of the Gospel, and which armed People against fanatical Delusions.

When some were ask'd why they studied to cast out all the Episcopal Clergy, seeing they could not yet supply their Churches, and why they would preach in a Meeting-house, where there was an Episcopal Minister unblameable in his Life and Doctrine, and draw the people from him, rather than go

to another Parish which wanted a Pastor altogether. It was answered, That there was less prejudice both to Church and People by the want of Preaching, than by the Preaching of Men of Episcopal Principles and Persuasions: And Mr. *Frazer* of *Bray* said in a Sermon before the Parliament, That it was better that the Temple of the Lord, did lie sometime unbuilt and unrepaired, than be rear'd up by *Gibeonites* and *Samaritans*. But to return, Nothing came before the *Presbyteries*, except Citations and Libels against Episcopal Ministers, and to make the greater dispatch, they sat every Week. The *Presbyteries* were a perfect Inquisition, who sent out Spies to inform them not only of the publick Sermons and open Practices of the Episcopal Clergy, but also what they spoke and did in private; Neither did they search only into their present behaviour, but also they made enquiry into the former Actions of their Lives, and if they upon diligent search made any discovery of any little Blemish or Failure, though before forgotten, it was made a part of their Indictment. Mr. C. an old Man of eighty years at *Lady-Kirk*, was libell'd among other things for Drunkenness, alledging an instance fifteen or sixteen Years ago, who as he prov'd the alledg'd Instance to be false, so he said very well, that seeing a latter Instance could not be produc'd, it did appear, that he was neither scandalously Drunken, nor guilty of the Habit thereof. There was a form'd Design of disgracing the Episcopal Clergy, and of rendring them infamous for Immorality; but it will be much for their advantage, that after earnest desires and endeavours to blacken them, there was little or nothing made out against them; When any real Scandals were found, they were loudly talk'd of, and publicly proclaim'd, and laid to the charge of the whole Party, as if it were a matter extraordinary to find some unworthy persons among nine hundred or a thousand: The least defects of Behaviour were heightened and aggravated as if they had been gross Crimes, and what was no fault was made one by a perverse and sinister Interpretation and uncharitable Construction. When more heinous Crimes were wanting, the Libels were stuff'd and swell'd with Articles, which of themselves amounted to nothing;

but accumulated together, were by them look'd upon and sustained as amounting to a great guilt. And when nothing could be devised against the Minister himself, he was accused for his Elders and Parishioners, if they could be tax'd for any real or apparent Crimes; For then it was said, that he profaned the *Holy Ordinance* of the *Lords Supper*, because he was assisted by such Elders, in the Administration of it; and that he admitted such persons, whereas yet neither the one nor the other were under Church Censure or legal Conviction. The Libels were generally so frivolous and impertinent that they ought to have been rejected with Scorn; but whatever was offered by the Bygots was admitted, and all care and caution us'd not to discourage them. The great Scandals of *Mr. Couper and Mr. Graham Ministers at Dumfermline* were the admitting Persons promiscuously to the Sacrament; the profaning the Lords Day in suffering people to bring in Kail, and fan Barly for the Pot that day; and by allowing their Children to play with others, though they were very much under that age, which even in the opinion of Jewish Doctors was obliged to the strict observation of the Sabbath. Another Minister was design'd to be libelled for *plucking a few Pease on Sunday*; but that being so parallel to the case of the Disciples, which our Saviour defended, it was not permitted to be made use of. One was accused because he sometimes Whistled; And another because one time playing at Bowls, he broke an innocent Jest, which none could have construed Profane, but they who were impure.

If any had at any time publicly or privately express'd any Zeal for Episcopacy, or reflected on the Covenant, and the Principles and Practices of the *Presbyterians*, who now always assume the names of the Godly, and the *peculiar people of God*, or if it could have been alledged, that they had any ways, tho never so indirectly, or even in obedience to the Magistrate, been the occasion of any trouble or uneasiness to them, this was never omitted; but was sure to be made a main Article of their Libel. Thus *Mr. Crawford* (the old Gentleman mentioned before) was accused for calling the Covenant a *Band of Rebellion*.

lion. Mr. *Heriot*, Minister at *Dalketh* was libelled, as calling
Monmouth and *Argyle* Rebels and Traitors, because he read the
 Proclamation set forth against them, and which was appointed
 to be read in Churches * by the King and Council. And a cer-
 tain Great Man was so picqu'd at him upon this account, that
 he would neither hear his Defences against the other Articles
 of the Libel, nor yet interpose his Authority (which was then
 the highest in the State) for keeping him in the Exercise of
 his Ministry, though it was desired by the Generality, and the
 best of his Parish. Mr. *Wood* of *Dumbar* was charged in his
 Libel with Cruelty, and a persecuting Spirit, because he per-
 suaded a Friend of his to put away a Servant who would
 not keep the Church, and thereby made both her self and her
 Mistress liable to the Law: He was also accused for saying to
 one who express his fears, as if the Liturgy of the Church of
England would be introduced among them, *God send us no*
worse; and that he had never express his thankfulness to God,
 for the deliverance of the Land from *Popery* and *Prelacy*. To
 the first he reply'd, That he was indeed sorry if any such Ex-
 pression had dropt from him, because he was sensible it was too
 mean for so great and so glorious a Church as that of *England*:
 To the other he said, That he thanked God heartily for any
 deliverance that the Land had from *Popery*, but he could not
 do so for the overthrow of *Prelacy*, unless he either acted the
 Hypocrite, or was convinced that *Presbytery* was the greater
 Blessing, and the more Ancient and Apostolical Government;
 which he never yet saw made out. Mr. *Graham* (whom I men-
 tioned before) had in his Libel imputed to him, the taking the
 Oaths of Allegiance and Canonical Obedience, which, they
 said, shewed him incorrigibly Episcopal. Mr. *Canper* had added
 to his Libel his taking the Oath of the *Test*. Mr. *Johnstone* of
Salin was accused for being too much affected to the Episco-
 pal Government, and for recommending superstitious and er-
 roneous Books to the people, as they were pleas'd to call the
Whole Duty Man, which was expressly mentioned. Another
 Mr. *Johnstone* Minister of *Burnt Island* was libell'd, for convers-
 ing with some persons whom they alledg'd to be no Friends to

the Government either of Church, or State; and for using the Doxology, &c. which, &c. could only refer to the Creed and Lords Prayer. The Minister of *Abbots-Hill* was accused for neglecting the Catechism of the *Westminster Divines*, and using that which was first set forth by the Synod of *Edinburgh*, and afterwards enlarged by the Reverend and pious Bishop *Scowgal*: The Catechism (I must tell you) is as well as the *Whole Duty of Man* much spoken against, and severely condemn'd as erroneous; but what are the particular Errours of it which make it so dangerous, I could never learn, nor do I believe you could guess them, except they were told you.

By these Instances you may understand the Nature of our *Presbyterian Libels*; I forbear to give you more, because I suppose there will be a Collection of them published: But you must know that they would never give any of the Episcopal Clergy the title of *Minister*, but only that of *Incumbent*. Mr. *Graham* complain'd of this, and demanded a Reason, who was told by way of Answer by one that preach'd at *Innerkeithing* that there were no true Ministers but *Presbyterian* Ministers; And as they denied them the Title of *Ministers*; so to take away their right to their respective Parishes, one Article of their Libel was, Their entring by Presentation from a Patron, and by Ordination, Collation, and Institution of the Bishop, contrary to the Word of God; The Constitution of this Church, Acts of Assemblies, and the Lands solemn Engagements. When the leading Men of that Party were upbraided for making Episcopal Ordination a ground of a Libel; They excus'd themselves and laid the blame of it upon the people; but in this they shewed their Hypocrisy and deceitful Dealing. For it was well known that the *Presbyterian* Ministers were always consulted in the forming of the Libels, and many of them were drawn up by themselves, and that all them were every where of the same strain, which makes it evident that it was a concerted business among them, to beget in the peoples minds an aversion to Episcopal Ministers, as not true Ministers, nor entring in at the right door; though they were also careful to foist in some other thing to excuse their Censures with the more judicious, who could not be so easily deluded and imposed upon.

As the Articles of the Libels were for the most part frivolous and impertinent, so the manner of their process was neither legal nor reasonable; for seldom did they let the Minister accused know his Accuser, and so he might have been made a Witness against him, which is contrary to the Laws of all Nations: Beside, they always received the Libel, and sustained the validity of it, before he was heard, and not regarding what Defences might be opposed, caused him to be cited to hear and see himself deposed: Nor was he suffered to be present at the examination of the Witnesses; but in many places, if not everywhere, the Witnesses were allowed to be present all together, when they gave in their Evidence: By the Civil and Canon Law, and the reasonable practise of all Nations, they who bear Hatred, Malice, or have discovered any Prejudice against the accused, cannot witness in Judgment against him; but this was wholly neglected and past by, and the most avowed, profest, and open Enemies received as Witnesses, and such also allowed to sit as Judges. Thus Mr. Calderwood a profest, and bitter Enemy of Mr. Heriot Minister of Dalkeith, who was the chief if not the only Informer against him, sat and judged him in the Presbytery in the quality of a Ruling Elder; And when the said Mr. Heriot desired that he might be removed, it was utterly refused him. So when Mr. George Purves Minister at Glensorse appeared before the same Presbytery at Dalkeith, he objected against some of the Witnesses as carrying Heart-Malice and ill Will towards him; they having sometime before assaulted him in the Pulpit with Swords and Staves, and taking him by the Throat, had gone near to have strangled him, if he had not got present Relief; therefore (said he) they ought not to be allowed as Witnesses against me, for they that did so, what will they not do to procure my ruin? Upon which the very Reverend and Worthy Matthew Selkirk, who is now settled Minister at Crichton, rose up and spoke to the Moderator; *That if these Men had done so out of Malice and personal Prejudice, they ought not to be received as Witnesses; but if they had done it for the Glory of God, he saw no reason why they might not be admitted.* If one part of the Deposition seemed to prove the Libel, or any Article

ticle of it, though the other did exculpate the Minister or extenuate his fault, the first was marked, and the other left out ; So I was told of one who is since dead, who was accused for saying, that *Women wanted Souls* ; The Witness declar'd he had heard him say so, but that he only deliver'd as the Opinion of another, and yet upon this the Article was look'd upon as proved : When the Witnesses cleared the Minister or asserted his Innocence, they were dismiss'd as knowing nothing of the Matter ; but such were greatly encouraged and cherished as shew'd themselves earnest and forward to divest him of the Character of a faithful, pious and upright Pastor : And when they pass'd the Sentence of Suspension or Deposition against any, at the intimation of it, from the Pulpit in his own Church, the whole Libel was read, though several of the Articles were so frivolous and trivial as not censurable by Law, and others of them that contained Matter of Scandal were no way proved.

As for the Episcopal Clergy, some of them disown'd their Authority, and would not appear ; Others appeared, and gave in their Defences ; and some perceiving the Partiality of the particular *Presbyteries* appeal'd to the next General Assembly, hoping to meet with greater Moderation there, or at least that before that time the Civil Government would put a stop to these rigid and unreasonable proceedings. Thus matters went till the sitting of the Assembly, and by these proceedings the *Presbyterians* not only encreas'd the prejudices of those who differed from them, but they also disgusted many of their Friends. The *Presbyterians* you know were much inferior to the Episcopal Party in number, quality, learning or good Sense ; and I assure you, that now they have lost much even of that Interest which they had in this Nation, many who thought well of them while they were kept under, are now ashamed of them, and have deserted them : I am told that many (even in the *West*) abominate them : It is most certain that in other places of the Kingdom, they are fear'd and dreaded as a Plague to Mankind, just as the *Jesuits* are.

When the time of the Assembly drew near, the several *Presbyteries* set about the chusing Commissioners for it, and things

things were so laid, that the most bigotted and hot-headed were generally chosen, and those of a more moderate Temper put by. If there had been any respect to the qualifications of Men, none in that part of the Country he lived in would have been prefer'd to Honest Dr. *Hardy*; but because heretofore he had kept correspondence with the Episcopal Party, and still prest Moderation towards them, he was excluded. In like manner Mr. *Alexander Pitcairn* of *Dron* was put by, because of his carriage at the last General Meeting, though he is said to have more Learning than the most of them; and there were but three others in the Presbytery with him, and none of them, of these old men to whom the Government of the Church was entrusted by the late Act of Parliament: He indeed came to the Assembly, sat in it, and interposed his Judgment, but was no Member of it, and so consequently had no Vote. When these Measures were perceived, it was concluded, That Mr. *George Campbel* should be also shuffled out of the Assembly; but that would have made their designs too apparent, there being none of his Presbytery whom they could bring in Competition with him, as also they had not much reason to fear any Opposition from him because of his modesty and quietness, which makes him averse to Contests and Jangling. He hath indeed the Character of a learned, good, and discreet Man; and by his Moderation at first he did very much displease his Brethren, which (as I am informed, but am loth to believe) hath obliged him for removing their Jealousies to express himself of late more severely against the Episcopal Party than he us'd to do formerly. As for Lay-Commissioners, such were pick'd out as either were most bygottedly affected to their Interests, or whom they desir'd and design'd to make fast Friends to their Party. In the Presbytery of *Churnside* the *Laird* of—was chosen, and in *Dunse* the Competition lay betwixt the *Laird* of *Lanton* and M. the last was like to have carried it, but some one suggested to the Moderator, that it would very much reflect upon them to have both the Commissioners for the *Merse* stain'd with the Scandal of *Adultery*; upon which the Commission was giv'n to *Lanton*, and the other was put by, whom yet they would fain have obliged,

obliged, he being one who has at present a considerable place in the Kingdom.

The *King* you know ought to have a Commissioner at every Assembly, to see that Affairs of State be not meddled with by the Brethren, who indeed still retain the strong Inclinations, which they as well as the Church of *Rome* have always shewed to meddle with them, pretending they only do this in *ordine ad spiritualia*. Every one look'd that the Earl of *Crawford* should have been the person, whom the *King* should have honoured with that Employment, and his Lordship himself rejoyced in expectation of it: But (to the surprizal of all) some few days before the Assembly sat, a Commission came down for My Lord *Carmichael*, which made the zealous Brethren hang down their Ears: And My Lord *Crawford* gave an Indication of his secret Grudg at the disappointment, by his entertaining every body who came to see him with Protestations, that he did not desire it, and with Reasons and Excuses why he would not have accepted of it, if it had been offered to him: But we may justly suspect that his Lordship would not have refused it, seeing he frequented the Assembly, and officiously meddled in all the Concerns of it, even before he was made a Member; and upon *Carmichael's* advancement, there were Letters immediately dispatched to procure a Commission for his Lordship from some Burgh or other, because a Commission from a Presbytery had been neglected, upon an expectation that his Lordship should have represented the *King* himself in the Assembly: His Lordship was so humble, that having miss'd of the highest Station, he would rather serve in the meanest, than not have an hand in advancing the good Cause; or be deprived of the occasion of perfecting what he had so zealously begun: He had indeed merited the highest Honour in the Kirk, but all except the very Bygots of that side approved the *King's* Choice as best and wisest for himself, and the Interest of the State. For My Lord *Carmichael* was look'd upon as a Man of good Sense, and he had lately giv'n proofs of his Discretion and moderate Temper, at the Visitation of the Colledg of *Glasgow*; whereas My Lord *Crawford* kept within no bounds of Moderation at the Visitation

Visitation of the University of *S. Andrews*, and was much taken notice of for his rough Usage of the Masters, particularly the Reverend old Dr. *Weems* Dean of *S. Andrewes*, and Principle of *S. Leonard's* College, who had been a Master in the said University for the space of 45 years, under whom My Lord *Crawford* studied Philosophy, and to whom he was then particularly obliged; the Dr. had also been a zealous Assertor of the Protestant Religion, and design'd to have made the University his Heir; notwithstanding all which, My Lord would not suffer him to have the favour of a Seat, when he attended that Visitation, and when the honest Gentleman's Age and Infirmary obliged him to rest himself on the step of a Stair in the room, because other Conveniency was deny'd him; his Lordship sent an Officer and raised him; such Roughness and Incivility you may think incredible, but I had it from the old Gentleman himself; of the which, with all other Particulars of that Visitation, as also of the Visitation of the other Colleges, I am told that the World may expect a full Account. But to return from whence my respect to my Lord *Crawford* carried me.

All the Members of the Assembly being duly couven'd on the appointed day, viz. the 16th. of *October*, they went to the High Church where Mr. *Gabriel Cunningham* Moderator of the last General Meeting did preach on *S. John 2. 17. And his Disciples remembred that it was written, the Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up.* In which the old man gave a greater Proof of his Memory than his Judgment, for the same Sermon had been preach'd on the same Text by Mr. *Oliver Bowlis*, an. 1643. before the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament at *Lond.* I have seen the printed Sermon compared with the Notes of what was preach'd, and I assure you Mr. *Gabriel* made an exact Repetition, and followed his Authour *verbatim* so far as was fit for his purpose, only he left out some things in the Close of Mr. *Bowlis's* Sermon, and added some bitter Reflections on the Episcopal Party.

There was a Parallel carried on betwixt Presbytery and that Miracle of our Saviour in whipping the Buyers and Sellers

lers out of the Temple ; the setting up Presbytery at this time was compared to the Work of the Reformation, and was made a more wonderful and *signal Act of Providence*. The Episcopal Party were called *formal and nominal Protestants, who professing to retain the Fundamentals, did pervert and corrupt the very Doctrine and all the Ordinances of Jesus Christ*. The Presbyterians you know can never have their fill of Preaching, and therefore a single Sermon was not thought sufficient to open their Assembly, but they returned in the Afternoon, where Mr. *Patrick Simson* preached, on 3. *Zach. 7. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, if thou wilt walk in my Ways, and if thou wilt keep my Charge, then thou shalt also judge my House, and shalt also keep my Courts, and I will give the Places to walk among these that stand by*. When his Matter and Expression were considered, no body thought his Sermon was borrowed as that in the forenoon had been, for it was Presbyterian Stuff course enough. He ascribed to their Meeting a Supremacy absolute and immediate next under Christ.

After both Sermons they went to the Place appointed for the Assembly ; Mr. *Gabriel Cunninghame* opened the Meeting with a Prayer, after which he made a Complement to the King's Commissioner, and desired that his Commission might be seen and read. The Commissioner having produc'd his Commission, he desired that every one might also shew theirs; which occasioned a confused Jangling for some time. The next thing they fell upon was the chusing of the Moderator, for Mr. *Gabriel* could no longer preside, it being against their Principles to allow a constant Moderator. For Persons were in Nomination, the first was Mr. *George Campbel* Minister at *Drumfries*, whose Character I have given you before ; the next was Mr. *Gilbert Rule*, who formerly pass'd under the name of Dr. *Rule* because of his practising Medicine ; he sat in the Assembly as Commissioner from the Colledg at *Edinburgh*, where he was lately installed Principal, in the room of the reverend and learned Dr. *Monro*. In the last times of Presbytery he was an Independent, but now he seems to own no such thing, but presseth the Presbyterian Government as of Divine Institution :

tion : He is of great Authority among his Party, and is reckon-
ed by them a learned and judicious man; but first he seems
not to have the Latine Tongue, for he oft woundeth *Priscian*,
and hath so little Command of that Language, that he dare not
extend his Prayers before the Students above two or three
Sentences, which when observed made one wish that all the
Presbyterians were obliged to pray in Latin, and then they
would not be so tedious, nor vent so much Nonsense in their
Prayers, as most of them now use to do : Again, the things he
hath published discover no small Ignorance; witness, his silly
*Gloss on that Expression of S. Jerome; Quid facit Episcopus, ex-
ceptâ Ordinatione, quod Presbyter non faciat* : Where he maketh
Ordinatio to be the ordering of the Meetings of the Clergy.

* He also published a Pamphlet, wherein he
represented the Principles and Practices of
Presbyterians; which is a very weak and
empty Paper full of Contradictions, where-
in the Scripture is grossly wrested, and
wherein several things are obruded as cer-
tain and of great Importance, which have
no Foundation either in Scripture, Reason, or Antiquity.
As by this it appears that his Learning is not great, though
he hath had the Boldness to enter the lists with *Dr. Stillingfleet*,
so he hath often in his Sermons vented himself bitterly against
the Episcopal Party.

* This Exposition of
the Fathers Words you
may find in the 169 p.
of his pretended An-
swer to *Dr. Stillingfleet's*
Unreasonableness of Se-
paration.

A third Person was *Mr. Meldrum* once Minister at *Aberdeen*,
but who hath preach'd at a Meeting-House in the *West* ever
since the Indulgence granted by *King James*. He indeed en-
tered the Ministry in times of Presbytery, but he also compli-
ed with Episcopacy when it was restored. He at first toge-
ther with *Mr. John Menzies* Professor of Divinity at *Aberdeen*,
did hesitate upon the Oath of Canonical Obedience; which
Bishop Mitchel of *Aberdeen* would by no means allow; so that
they both ran a risque of being depriv'd. But afterwards up-
on a Conference at *S. Andrews* with the Archbishop of that See,
who it seems dealt somewhat smoothly with them, they both
subscribed the Oath of Canonical Obedience, and were sent

back to the Bishop of *Aberdeen* with commendatory Letters from the Primate; upon which they were admitted to their Places, which the one kept till his Death, and the other till the Oath of the Test. I am told that Mr. *Meldrum* denies the matter of Fact, and will not acknowledg that ever he took the Oath of Canonical Obedience, but the thing is too notorious to be denied; for as the Primate of *S. Andrews* assur'd the Bishop of *Aberdeen* of it by a Letter under his hand, of which Mr. *Meldrum* himself was the Bearer; so the Bishop of *Aberdeen* to make their Compliance as publick and exemplary as he thought their demurring and refusal had been scandalous, before he remitted them to the Exercise of their Ministry, caused a publick Intimation of their Subscription to be made in the old Church of new *Aberdeen*, which Intimation was made by Dr. *Keith* afterwards Professor of Divinity at *Edinburgh*, which certainly would not have been done, if the matter of Fact had not been certain: Especially if it be consider'd that they themselves, tho present, did not offer to contradict it. When this rigorous Proceeding of the Bishops against them was in ordinary Discourse complain'd of, he defended himself by an *old Scotch Proverb*, which is, *That a sidgeing Mare should be well girded*: And it has been told me the Subscriptions both of Mr. *Menzies* and Mr. *Meldrum* are still extant. However Mr. *Meldrum* payed true Canonical Obedience, as much as any other Minister, to the Bishop of *Aberdeen*, and lived in particular Friendship with Bishop *Scowgal*, who succeeded in that See: he frequented the Presbyteries and Synods, submitted to their Acts, and assisted several times when the Bishop ordained, and so far deserted the Principles of the Covenant and our *Scottish Presbiteryans*, that he swore and subscribed the Declaration, when he was admitted Rector of the *Marishal College of Aberdeen*. It cannot be denied but that he carried himself well, and gained the good Opinion of all, while he kept his Place, and even after he had left it for not taking the Test, he did not desert the Church, nor renounce Communion with the Episcopal Party, until the time that King *James* discharged the taking of Oaths, and suspend-

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ed the Laws which enacted them, and then because he was not permitted to return to the Exercise of his Ministry at *Aberdeen*, tho he was allowed to go any where else, he became so picqu'd and offended at the Bishops, whom he apprehended were the Cause thereof, that he presently struck in with the Presbyterians, and either to make his Change appear the more sincere, or because he had really alter'd his Judgment and the Principles he formerly profess'd, he hath broke of all correspondence with the Episcopal Party, though some of them were his most intimate Acquaintance, and as Occasion offer'd vented himself as bitterly and severely against them, as any Presbyterian whatsoever. And when he was last at *Aberdeen*, tho he was kindly and civilly invited by his old Colleagues to take their Pulpit, yet he would never preach for them, nor so much as hear them; but chose rather to go preach in the Meeting-House, where he exhorted the People to Thankfulness for the deliverance of the Land from Prelacy, and to be earnest in their Prayers that it might never return again. In him we have an apparent Instance, how great a Temptation even to a judicious Man Picque and Interest and Popularity do oftentimes prove. At first he pretended that he would only attempt to reclaim the deluded People of the *West* from their Errors and Extravagancies, who (he said) had been lost for want of good and knowing Ministers amongst them; but it was plainly foretold by a Person of Quality and great Worth, that it would appear he could not work upon them, but that they would insnare him, and bring him over to all their Foolerries.

The fourth and last Person was one Mr. *Hugh Kennedy*, who is usually called Father *Kennedy* by the Phanaticks here, and by others *Bitter Beard*: he is of a little Stature, but such a one as has made a great Bustle in his time; he was a Ring-leader of the Remonstrator-Party, and with the *Scottish Army* at *Newcastle*, when they delivered up King *Charles I.* and received a part of the Price of his Blood, as is commonly reported six thousand Marks. In the Year 1660 he was deposed by a Synod of Presbyterians for several Crimes; especially

X ly for being a Firebrand among his Brethren, and for a Book entituled *The Causes of Gods Wrath upon Scotland*, which Sentence of Deposition was never taken off, till the last day but one of this Assembly, as you shall hear afterwards.

These were the four Persons nominated to preside in the Assembly; when it came to the Vote, Mr. *Gilbert Rule* had four or five; Mr. *Geo. Meldrum* one; Mr. *George Campbel* forty eight; but the most were in favour of Mr. *Hugh Kennedy*, and so the Chair was assign'd to him, who came short of the rest in Learning, yet surpassed them in Subtilty and Malice. Having chosen a Moderator, the next thing requisite was a Clerk, they appointed Mr. *John Spalding*, who had been Clerk to the General Meeting, to officiate in the interim till they should chuse one, but he continued all the time of the Assembly, for there were so many Competitors for the Clerkship, and each of them had such Interest by their Friends in the Assembly, that they durst never put it to the hazard of a Vote, for fear of dividing the Assembly; the Competitors were as we heard, *Merfington*, *Corfrigge*, two Lords of the Session; *Park Hay*, the famous *James Stewart*, and one *Kerr*.

In this Assembly there was an hundred and eighty Persons, Clergy and Laity. There were no Commissioners from the Shires of *Angus*, *Merus*, *Aberdeen*, or any of the more Northern Parts of the Kingdom; and even several Places on the North side of *Tay* had none; only here and there in a Corner, where the Presbyterians had seated themselves, and assumed the name of a Presbytery, there were one or two chosen and Commissionated to represent them in the Assembly. None of the Universities or Colleges had any Representatives there, save that of *Edinburgh*, whom Mr. *Gilbert Rule* represented; so that this was no more a General Assembly of the Church of *Scotland*, than that of *Trent* can be called a General Council of the Catholick Church; nor did any other Spirit rule in the one than what prevailed in the other, I mean a Spirit of Faction, Interest and Prejudice, as will appear by the Consideration of their Proceedings, though there were Prayers enough put up for another Spirit, if they had been disposed for it.

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The Presbyterians of Scotland have always contested with Kings about the *Power of calling, adjourning and dissolving Assemblies*. They pretend to an intrinsic Power in themselves in this matter, to which (as Mr. Rule says in his Representation, &c.) that of the Magistrate is cumulative, and not privative. The adjusting of this Matter therefore was the first Difficulty brought before the Moderator, and no small Tryal of his Skill; for as in the one hand they had all the Reasons in the World to complement and gratify the King; so on the other it is well known the Presbyterians are very tenacious of their pretended Rights, and very jealous of Encroachments upon them, which makes them cautious of giving Precedents. Now this Difficulty he resolved thus, he suffered the Commissioner to appoint the time of their Meeting, and without taking notice of what the Commissioner had done, he himself adjourned them to the same time; sometimes also to complement the Commissioner he would so cunningly smooth the business, as when he had resolved upon the time of their Meeting, he would first ask the Commissioner if his Grace could attend them at such a time, and then adjourn to the said time; so they always agreed about the time of their Meetings, and by this means the Debate betwixt them and the King was waved, and never decided. There happened a pleasant Passage to this Purpose, which I must not omit; Mr. *Gabr. Cunningham* presiding one day in the absence of the ordinary Moderator, he asked the Commissioner what should be the next time of their Meeting; but whether it was out of Forgetfulness that he did so or not, he corrected himself in his Prayer. For he began with an acknowledgment of *Christ Jesus being supreme Head and Governour of the Church*, and then said these Words, *Thou knowest, O Lord, that when we own any other, it is only for Decency sake.*

The next day they met, and only heard the King's Letter read, and appointed some Persons to draw up an Answer. We expected to have seen both in Print, as is usual, but neither of them has been as yet published, because, as is supposed, there was something in the King's Letter a little checking, which

which they would not have every one to know, viz. *That he favoured their Government, because he was made to understand it was most agreeable to the Inclinations of the People; that he would have them very moderate in their Proceedings, and do nothing which might displease their neighbour Church*: This last did not go down well with them, for it troubled them to be made in any ways accountable to a Church, which in all their Discourses they exclaimed against as *superstitions and idolatrous*, and into which they are designing to introduce their glorious Reformation. Neither was the first very acceptable, for if the Inclinations of the People were the Motive of setting up Presbyterian Government, when it should (as it very easily might) be represented, that the Inclinations of the People were against Presbytery, and the Spirit and rancour of the present Presbyterians, his Majesty might be moved to remove this, and set up another Government. Therefore in their Answer they asserted that their Government was not only suitable to the Inclinations of the People, but also most agreeable to the Word of God, and that this might not be looked upon merely as the Flourish of an Epistle, they design'd to back it with the Authority of an Act; which should declare their Government both of Divine Right, and also the true Legal Government of this Church, which they pretended had never suffered any Alteration, except in time of Usurpation, Tyranny and great Oppression. But the Commissioner apprehending the Consequences of such an Act, thought it not fit to let the same pass, without Advice from Court; and therefore desired a Copy of it to send to the King his Master, who it seems did not approve of it: For it never more appeared here, at which the Brethren have not a little murmured. And if it had passed, as it would not have contributed much to the Establishment of their Government, it being the Act of so inconsiderable an Assembly; so it would only have discovered their Ignorance, Falshood and Impudence: For it is clear from our Histories (as was declared in a late Discourse) that Presbytery heretofore was never settled but in times of Rebellion; and what Enemies our *Scottish* Presbyterians have been always

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to Kings, and how much they were wont to encourage Rebellion King *James VI.* has from his Experience fully and plainly declared, in his *Basilicon Doron*, where he cautions his Son against them as the most barbarous, treacherous and perfidious sort of People, who are less to be trusted than the thieving Borderers, or the wildest uncivilized *Highlanders*. The Argument also, which Sir *James Montgomery* of *Skelmorly* used for Presbytery in the Parliament, shews how much it favours Monarchy and Kingly Power, which was this, That it was the Peoples only Security against the Encroachment of Kings, and a proper Curb to restrain their Insolence and Extravagancy; And indeed when they are encouraged, they so restrain them as to make them signify nothing, as appears by their Behaviour to King *James VI.* before he went to *England*, and what they did to King *Charles I.* whom they persecuted and pursued to Death. As to the Moderation which his Majesty required of them, they promised with a solemn Attestation, that they would shew all the Moderation that his Majesty could expect; which when considered was not a very great Obligation on them; for if the King understand them aright, his Expectation will be very small, Moderation being very rarely to be found among Presbyterians.

It being an old Custom of general Assemblies to ease the Ministers of the Place where they meet from preaching, they ordered this day who should preach the following Sunday, and when they were appointing Preachers for the rest of the Churches and Meeting-Houses in *Edinburgh*, one † stood up, and said; It was fit to send Ministers to the Conformists Kirks too: But the Moderator perceiving the Commissioner displeased at the Proposal, replied; That they sought none of their Help, and they should get as little. The first that preached in the High Church before the Commissioner, was Mr. *Geo. Meldrum*, whose Text was *Philip. 4. Ver. 5.* The Sermon was framed to please the various Humours of Men, and to recommend himself to Persons of different Tempers, for the general Drift of it seemed to be for Moderation, which both the Court and all good discreet People

called for ; yet he caution'd it with such Restrictions and Exceptions as that he might justify himself with the more rigid, and prevent their jealousies and suspicions of him : He who preached the *Sunday* following (if my Memory fail not) was one *Hamilton*, who was somewhat singular in his reckoning the Years during which we of this Nation have been deprived of the Gospel ; for whereas the rest of the Presbyterians reckon but 28. *viz.* from the Restauration of the Royal Family and Episcopacy, he ran ten Years farther backward, and made it 38. leaving People to guess his reason, and when the Matter was enquired into, it was found that he dated the want of the Gospel from the Year 1652. because since that time they never had a General Assembly, and then too they were not suffered to sit, for the English Governor here raised them, because they had no Warrant from *Cromwel*, and carried them out surrounded with Guards to *Bruntsfield-Links*, where he dismissed them with a severe threatening, if any three of them should be found together. It would be tedious to give you a particular account of all the Sermons which were preached here in the time of the Assembly, but in general I assure you they were very nauseating to all rational Persons, for except one or two preached by Mr. *Carsstairs* and Mr. *Robert Wyllie*, they were either miserably flat and dull, or else full of bitter Zeal against the Episcopal Party ; Instead of the Doctrins and Duties of Christianity, the excellency and divine Institution of their Government was the subject of their Discourses, and when they happened on any necessary or weighty Point of Religion, they treated them in such a manner, as if they had design'd to burlesque Religion, and render it ridiculous, which gave a great advantage to atheistical and profane Men : So it is observed that Religion doth suffer more now by the setting up of the Presbyterians, than it did or was like to have suffer'd in this Nation by the attempts of the Jesuits and other Papists a little while ago ; for then it fell out that People search'd and considered the Points of their Religion, and they that were ignorant of the Truth or dis-believed it, came to understand it, and to be convinced

vinced of it, and were resolved to be stedfast in the defence of it, whereas now the Contest being about Forms of Government, and Discipline, which generally People look upon as matters of lesser moment, all enquiry into the important Points is laid aside, and seeing there is such Hypocrisie and Ignorance among these very Men who set up themselves for the peculiar People of God, and that they who would be thought as it were inspired, or at least of all others most acted by the Spirit of God, are guilty of base and unworthy Actions; this tempts People to think all Religion a sham and cheat.

On Monday the twenty fifth they met at eight a Clock of the Morning for Prayer only. Some say eight, others ten, and some that eleven prayed successively: One told me he stayed till five of them prayed, however they continued to pray from eight to twelve. The Moderator began, and when he ended he named the person who should pray next, and every one did the like till Dinner time. Among others who were desired to pray there was an old Man who at first declined it, pretending a bodily indisposition, but when it was voted he should pray, he fell to it, and prayed longer a great deal than any of the rest. This Exercise of long and continued Prayer was so unusual, that it became presently the talk of the Town, and people had different Sentiments about it, and put various Constructions upon it: Some said they were practising what our Lord condemned, *S. Matth. 6.* considering that their Prayers generally are but Babling and vain Repetitions. Others that they were imitating the * Popish Masses. Some dreaded the effects of these Prayers when they called to mind the custom of their Predecessors, who used to usher in some Villany by Fasting and such solemn Prayers, as *Tacitus* reports of *Nero*, that when he solemnly consulted the Gods, it was a certain sign that he intended some cruel and bloody Enterprize: But the more probable seemed to be that this was to pray themselves, if possible, into a moderate Temper, as the King's Letter required, or to vindicate their want of it, as be-

* Ten or Twelve of which are said in a Morning one after another.

ing more agreeable to the mind of God, seeing it was deny'd them after so many Prayers. To this purpose one of them had a very remarkable Expression in his Prayer; for, having in compliance with the rest put up some petitions for Moderation, at

* That is to turn all
the Episcopal Clergy
out of the Church.

last he concludes with these words, But, O Lord! to be free, it would be better to make a clean * house. This Week they appointed Committees for the several Affairs that were before them, which sat at their own convenience, and now and then they met in full Assembly, but they pass'd away the time without doing any thing considerable, so that some began to apply to them, *Parturiunt Montes*, &c. The Moderator laid the blame of it on the ill attendance of the Members of the Assembly, and the slow Proceedings of the Committee; but the true reason was, That they were restrained by the Instructions sent from Court, and the fears of encreasing the clamours and prejudices of the Country, as also they were somewhat retarded by the unskillfulness of their Brethren in managing Affairs of this Nature. The Old Men having for a long time been disused, and the Younger Sort wanting experience; there were besides some little differences among the Brethren, tho the Moderator did all he could to smother them; for when there was any appearance of the least Jar, he referred the matter which was like to occasion it, back to the Committee to be further considered, and then as on all other occasions in his Prayer he thanked God for the *Oneness* that was among them. For they endeavour'd to make the World believe that there was great Harmony in their Assembly which they talked of with a great deal of Fondness and Vanity, especially when the Cameronian Party joyn'd themselves to them, tho it may be justly said that matters were rather huddled up betwixt them, than any true Union effected, and if the cunning of the Moderator had not prevented it, the Breach was like to have been wider; For the two Persons that appear'd for the Cameronians, viz. Mr. Shiels, and Mr. Linnen gave in two Papers, one of Overtures, and another defending their Practices as being most agreeable to the

the Practices of the true Presbyterians; and upbraiding the rest as deserting and apostatizing from them, which reflected on all that sat there, and yet they offered in the face of the Assembly to make good and justify the same. At first the Moderator checkt and rebuk'd them, but perceiving they would not submit themselves, they were first sent out, and then after some time call'd in again, and taken by the hand and desired to sit down with the rest, without entering upon any debate. He told them upon their second appearance, that he knew they meant well, and had done them service, and that they did expect good from them, tho at first he said they were rash young Men, who had done much hurt to the Church. The Sunday following both the Cameronians at *Restalridge*, and the other Brethren in the Pulpits of the Town, preach'd upon this Agreement and Union of the Parties. The latter gave God thanks for it, and the former justified themselves, and declared that thereby they had neither condemned their own former Practices, nor yet approved of the Corruptions that were among their Brethren. The Cameronians in the Country having got information of this Union, sent some of their number to the Assembly with some Papers, who were not allowed to come in before the Assembly, but some of the Brethren were sent out to confer with them, who received their Papers, and giving them fair Words, dismissed them. The Papers having never been publickly produc'd, the Contents of them were not known.

As to the Affair which came before the Assembly, the first thing remarkable was the Business of Mr. *Gabriel Simple* which took up some days; He had received a Call (as the Word is) both from the People of *Jedburgh*, and also from those of *Killpatrick*, and each of them petition'd the Assembly for him, because of *Spiritual Sickness* and *Pastoral Relation* which they had to him; At the same time there was an Address read from no less than twelve Parishes in *Northumberland*, as was pretended, desiring that the said Mr. *Gabriel* might not be taken from them, he having taken compassion on them when they lay weltering in their Blood, and no Eye to pity them,

them, and shewing that England was over-gone with Briars and Thorns which would over-run Scotland too if Mr. Gabriel did not weed them out, that by Mr. Gabriel's care twelve Parishes were well provided, which could not be so well done by any ordinary Man; That he had been twenty four Years among them which was sufficient to found a Pastoral Relation. Mr. Gilbert Rule seconded this Address, and pleaded for those of Northumberland, that they might have the benefit of Mr. Gabriel; alledging, that it was Charity to plant the Gospel in England, and he declar'd that he knew not only twelve Parishes, but that for fifty Miles they wanted the Word of God; For (said he) betwixt Berwick and New-Castle there was less practice of Piety, than amongst Papists, or Heathens, and therefore it was fit to send Ministers among them, he concluded his Discourse thus, That as we ought to plant the Gospel where-ever we can, so the Presbyterians of England having now a Liberty granted them by King and Parliament they might very well call back such as had been driven in amongst them in time of Persecution. To this last the Moderator reply'd, Mr. Gilbert, What if they should call you? And when he answer'd, that perhaps he would then go, he said to him, Mr. Gilbert, I do not think you so great a Fool. But as to Mr. Gabriel the Moderator and the generality of the Assembly were for calling him back to Scotland, alledging that Charity began at home, when they had reason'd a long while upon the Matter too and again, Mr. Kirkson stood up and said, What needs this ado? For he had heard that Mr. Gabriel durst not return to Northumberland, there being an Order from several Justices of Peace to apprehend him, which Mr. Gabriel confess'd to be true. This decided the matter as to Northumberland, and shewed that Mr. Gabriel would have had his forc'd return coloured with a Solemn Invitation; and when it came to be consider'd, whether Jedburgh or Killpatrick should have him; he discovered his own Inclinations before it came to a Vote, telling that Kirkpatrick had no Manse for him, neither could he maintain a Horse at it, when the Votes were a stating Mr. Gabriel Cunningham desired the Moderator to pray for drowning the

noise

noise of the Assembly. But Mr. Kirktown answered, *What needs all this fool Praying, it was not the Custom to pray at every thing, so they past immediately to voting, and the Votes carried it for Jebburgh, which no doubt was according to Mr. Gabriel's own desire.*

The next great Affair was the removing Mr. George Campbell from being Minister at *Drumfries* to be Professor of Divinity at *Edinburgh*, which was made vacant by the Visitation of the College, for that Dr. Strachan could not comply with the Terms requir'd in the Act of Parliament. The Magistrates of *Edinburgh* being Patrons of the place gave a Call to Mr. Campbell, which was backed by the earnest invitation of some others about the Town. He indeed deserves the place better than any of that Party having qualifications of Learning and Modesty beyond what is usual to be found amongst them. But as the People of *Drumfries* were not willing to part with him, so neither was he willing of himself to settle at *Edinburgh* in his old decaying Years, especially when he perceived such strong prejudices against the Presbyterian Party to encrease. The matter was referr'd to the Assembly where it was long and hotly debated. The necessity and importance of training up Youth was alledged for his coming to *Edinburgh*, but he on the other hand said, he was more capable of doing good at *Drumfries*, and had stronger ties and obligations to that place, and at last added that he not only had not the inward call to accept of the Profession of Divinity, but did find in himself an inward aversion and backwardness thereto, which he thought should not be slighted; for there was in it not only *αὐτοπροσώπων* but *Θεῶν*, which occasion'd the matter of the inward call to be considered and debated. Mr. Rule said, That it consisted in the internal Qualification; for the place, and the outward harmonious Call of the Church, and that as they were Judge of the first, so the last would be known by putting it to a Vote: adding, That the Spirit of God was a harmonious Spirit, and that the Spirit of the Prophets was subject to the Prophets. Mr. Campbell reply'd, That he put a wrong Gloss on the Place, but however he would

would not debate it now. It was referred back to the Committee and considered again in a full Assembly, and at last the matter was put to a Vote, having before they collected th Votes prayed for direction therein. By the Votes it was carried that he should come to *Edinburgh*; tho it was observed that the more judicious part were against his coming, being prevail'd upon by the weight of his own Arguments. However after they had resolved upon his coming, they allowed him till *Lammas* following to remove himself and his Family (as some say) as others would have, that he might in this time bring his mind to close with the Call of the Assembly, because he had said, he would leave the Kingdom rather than obey.

A day or two after the Decision of this business concerning Mr. *Campbel*, there came a Commission from the Town of *S. Andrews* to My Lord *Crawford* to represent them in the Assembly : The Moderator usher'd it in with a great Commendation of his Lordship, and the manifold Obligations which they had to him, and regreted he had not been a Member of their Assembly sooner, and that he had not his Commission from a Presbytery; for which, he said, the Presbytery of *Couper* particularly should be rebuked, in that they had neglected him. But the reason was, (as I told you before) that it was expected he should have been Commissioner for the King. When this Commission was read, My Lord *Crawford*, (whose Joy for which was to be seen in his Countenance) stood up, and made a Discourse about the Weight and Importance of that Trust, and of his Unworthiness to be a Member of that Venerable Assembly, and desired that they might allow him the favour which they had granted to Mr. *George Campbel*, which was to have till *Lammas* next to advise on it : His Lordship not knowing well what to say, but thinking he was obliged to say something, fell on this Impertinence; which moved the Spleen of the Assembly, and made them spoil the gravity of their Meeting: And indeed who could forbear laughing, to hear one make a scruple of acting by Commission, when he had made none to act without one; officiously attending the
several

several Sessions of the Assembly, and particular Committees, and giving his Opinion in all the Matters that came before them. And what a ridiculous thing was it, to ask Nine Months time to advise whether he should be a Member of a Meeting which was to be intirely dissolved within a fortnight.

After they had sat ten or twelve days, they received a Petition from two Persons, the one was called *Smith*, the other *Grieve*, in name of the Town of *Dundee*. In the Petition, which was drawn up according to their usual Canting Stile, they complain'd of their want of the Ministry there, and desired that some might be sent to them to preach the Gospel; upon this the Commissioner asked if the Episcopal Ministers of that place were legally turned out; and it being replied that they were deprived by the Privy Council a year ago; the Moderator was suffered to proceed in the business, who pressed it with great Earnestness, telling the Assembly, that he knew that not only in *Dundee*, but that in all *Angus* the Gospel was not preach'd, and that there was no true Minister there, tho he and all the World besides knew, that except one or two Churches all the rest of that Shire have Ministers settled in them, who daily exercise their Functions, but indeed they are Episcopal Ministers; whom neither he, nor others of that party make any account of, for on all Occasions they so express themselves, as if the Gospel and Ministry were confin'd to the Presbyterian Kirk. But to return to the business of *Dundee* and *Angus*, Mr. *Andrew Bowie*, and one Mr. *Reiel* declared to the Assembly, That they had been in that Country already by an Order from the General Meeting, but that they had no encouragement from that People, on the contrary they had met with great Discouragements, and perceived that they were so averse and indisposed for receiving the Gospel, that it was needless to send any to them; for they would not get an Auditory except in a Kirk, and the People would not give them the Keys of the Kirk doors, nor admit of them except they were compell'd by Authority. To which the Moderator replied, Brethren, as you have made an Offer of the Gospel to them in the name of the General Meeting, so you

must now go and offer it in the name of the General Assembly ; and added, That they would recommend the Affair to the Privy Council, who would certainly see to their encouragement, and to have the Keys of some Kirk or other given them. As for Dundee, which was said to be generally refractory, the Moderator said, They could and would plant Ministers and Elders therein, whether the Town Council would or not. Which if it be not an Intrusion, let the World judg: When it was desired that some others might be added to these two Brethren, Mr. William Spence sometime Minister of Glendoven was named by several, which was opposed by others, because the removing of him would leave the Presbytery of Anghterarder without a Quorum, as I mentioned before ; however after some Debate, it was carried he should go: And other three also were appointed to be in readiness upon advertisement of the success and encouragement of these Brethren. As for this Mr. William Spence, one of the Apostles for Angus he served some years under Episcopacy, but having desired an Augmentation of his Stipend, and it being refused ; he conceived a Picque at the Bishops, because they gave him not (as he judged) due Assistance before the Commission of the Kirk, which he first vented by passing severe Reflections upon them, and afterwards he grew to that height, that he dispersed Papers bespattering both them and the Government, and addressed to the Presbytery for a Reformation: His Fellow Presbyters endeavoured to reclaim him, and to suppress his Libels, but their Attempts being in vain, the Matter was carried before the Bishop and Synod of Dunblane, who finding him obstinate deposed him, and afterwards upon his further Contumacy and Disobedience excommunicated him, which Censure was never yet taken off, because he never shewed any Repentance, neither made any Application about it.

Shortly after the receiving of this Petition from Dundee, there came a Letter to the Assembly from Aberdeen subscribed by some Phanaticks there ; who, I assure you, in that Place are neither considerable for Number, nor Quality. The Letter

Letter was to the same purpose, desiring the Assembly to send them Ministers, and complaining that they had wanted the Gospel for Thirty Years. Mr. *George Meldrum* was present when this Letter was read, and neither contradicted the Assertion nor qualified it; but suffered it to pass without any Reflection or Censure. Which silence of his was admired by those that knew him, neither could they excuse it, considering that he both knew the place particularly, and could not but be convinced that the Gospel had been preached there, in as great Purity as in any place in the Kingdom: For not to speak of the present Ministers of that City, who have the Approbation of all wise and judicious Persons, both for preaching and other Qualifications. Mr. *David Lyall*, now at *Montross*, was a long time Minister there, and is esteemed to have a good Talent of popular preaching. Mr. *John Menzies* Professor of Divinity, who was ever esteemed an eloquent Preacher, as well as a learned Man, continued in the exercise of his Ministry there, till the year 1684. and Mr. *Meldrum* himself was Twenty of these years Minister there also; and Dr. *Garden* who succeeded him must be acknowledged to be both a knowing man and an able Preacher; one who teacheth the truth in sincerity, without respect of Persons. So that Mr. *Meldrum's* new Interest must have strongly perverted his Judgment, or he may be justly charged with Hypocrisie and Cowardice; seeing, for fear of displeasing a Party, he would not own the truth on so fair an Occasion. The Presbyterians speak much against a sinful silence, and certainly such was his at this time. Some alledged, that the sending of this Letter was a Device of his own, to get himself sent back to *Aberdeen*; for one would have thought that the Assembly would rather have sent him than another, because he might be supposed to know both the place and the People best where he had been so long Minister; but the Assembly took no notice of him, and appointed two to go thither to preach the Gospel, of which one was Mr. *Shiel* a *Cameronian*. So that as Mr. *Meldrum* fell off from the

Episcopal Party because he was not permitted to return to his Place at *Aberdeen*, for the same Reason he should now desert the Presbyterians, seeing they would not restore him unto it.

Upon some other occasion it was proposed by the Moderator to send some other Persons to make an offer of the Gospel to the rest of the Northern-Shires; accordingly an Act past, appointing several (I know not the exact number) who were commended to the Council for their *Viaticum*, as the Moderator worded it, which Mr. *Frazer* of *Brae* found fault with as sordid, and then he wisht them to call it Maintenance or Provision, or what they pleased, for they knew his meaning well enough.

But that which is most remarkable, is, that in this as well as the two former instances, Persons were commissioned to preach and make an offer of the Gospel; for in these very Terms it was proposed, stated, voted and determined, as if they were going to convert Pagans and Infidels; this shews their Ignorance and Uncharitableness, and is to some a just ground (tho there were no other reason) for separating from them, and refusing Communion with them, because they divide from the Catholick Church in all Ages, they pervert and alter the nature of the Gospel, and teach another Gospel than what is to be found in Scripture. Indeed they cannot justify their present Proceedings, and all this noise they make in setting up themselves, unless their way (as they use to speak) be of equal importance with the Gospel it self; but if the Gospel be in the Scripture, the Episcopal Party have preached it more plainly and purely than they. And if they teach another Gospel than what has been taught by the former, they must leave the Scriptures, and with the Papists have recourse to vain and uncertain Traditions, or to the more vain Imaginations of *Eschusasts*.

Before I relate to you any more of their Acts, I'll divert you with an account how the Assembly dealt with such Ministers as had appealed to them upon the hope of milder Treatment and greater Justice than what had been found in the particular Presbyteries. If you had seen the last Letter they sent to the King, as it was first presented to the Assembly to be approved and subscribed, you would have concluded that all Grievances had been redressed, and that the Episcopal Clergy had received a reparation of all the Wrongs which they had complained of, for the Letter expressly contain'd so much, but the Libel was so gross that it could not pass tho the Moderator urged it, wherefore the amendment of it being referred to Mr. *Gilbert Rule* and Mr. *Robert Wyllie*, they made it run thus; That the same was recommended to the Commissioners of the Assembly, and several Synods to be redressed. How true even this is, I cannot tell, time will shew, but sure I am 'twas not done by the Assembly, for they shifted off the examination of these Appeals, saying it was injurious to the Presbyteries to question the justice and legality of their Proceedings, and pressed that the Complainants might be referred back to the particular Presbyteries and Synods from which they had appealed, which was done, and that was equivalent to the approving all that was done, because none would condemn their own Proceedings. The Affair of *Peebles* is an evident proof that the Assembly was not willing to canvass the Actings of any Presbytery, far less to renverse their Orders and Sentences. The Duke of *Queensberry* being not only Patron, but also a very considerable Heritor of the Parish, was as well as others both in point of Honour and Interest concerned to have the matter discussed; and Mr. *Knox* who was called to be Minister there righted. Wherefore the Duke recommended the Business with great earnestness to the Commissioner, that it might be brought before the Assembly, being confident that the Assembly would not take upon them to approve the Proceedings of the Presbytery, who had governed themselves neither by

Reason,

Reason, Justice, nor Equity in the Matter; as was made appear in a printed Information which I have here-
Vide the first Page. with sent you; whereupon the Commissioner interposed so far as to get it one day proposed in a full Assembly; but when the Clark took up the Process to read it, there was such murmuring among the Brethren, that what he read could neither be heard nor understood, and some two or three whispered the Moderator in the Ear; so that before the Clark had read six lines, he stood up, and addressing to the Commissioner told his Grace, that it was fit to wave this Affair for the present, that the Brethren were displeased that it was brought in so abruptly before the Assembly, when it had not been considered in the Committee, that they were not ripe enough as yet to take cognizance of it, and that there were several particulars in that Affair which were not fit to be spoken of in publick; to which the Commissioner yielded either out of too much good Nature, or out of fear that the stubborn and forward Men would have baffled his Authority if he had offered to oblige them to do any thing against their will. To save his Credit in yielding to the Assembly, he required them peremptorily to fall upon it at the next meeting; the Moderator promised it, but there was never a Syllable more of it, nor it seems did the Commissioner think fit to start it again. Before I leave this Matter, I must tell you a remarkable passage in Mr. Veatch his Answer which he publish'd to that printed Information which I spake of before: *That whereas it was objected that he had not a popular Call to the Parish of Peebles. This, saith he, ought not to militate against me; for if by such a Call be meant an unanimous Call of all, or the greatest part of the Parish; it can be expected but in very few places of the Country to a Presbyterian Minister, and never at all, saith he, to be hoped for in the Parish of Peebles.* This indeed is a certain Truth, but it was thought strange to see a Presbyterian so plainly confess it, seeing hitherto they would have the King, and all the World believe, that both their Persons and Govern-
 ment

ment were most agreeable to the Inclinations of the People. Mr. *Veatch* had not his Wits about him when he let fall this Declaration; and it seems was more intent upon his own particular, than the general Interest of the Party he belongs to; for hereby he gives a Lie unto the Parliament, overturns the Ground whereon the Government was built, and plainly intimates that he and his Brethren are, and must be Intruders, seeing they cannot have the call and consent of the People. The want whereof was charged heavily on the Episcopal Clergy in the West by Mr. *George Meldrum* in a Sermon before the Parliament, who thought it so heinous a Crime, that he said, *before he obtruded himself upon a People against their own will, he would chuse rather to beg his Fraught and go to America*: It were to be wished that all his Brethren were of that mind, for then the Nation would be soon rid of them; and I assure you they might have their Fraught without begging it; for both Gentry and Commons would pay that more chearfully than their Stipends. Now if it was a Crime in the Episcopal Clergy to take the Cure of a Parish without the expresse formal consent of the People, what may it be thought in a Presbyterian to come in upon a People when they expressely declared and protest against him. I know no other way of justifying this, but by asserting the Doctrine which one of their Laicks raised from *ver. 6. Psal. 119.* while he was lecturing to the Neighbourhood, *viz.* The People of God may sin, but the Wicked must not sin, and there is a heavy Vengeance waiting them if they do; but we will leave this, and return to the Point we were upon.

The Assembly was just so puzzled with the Appeals of the Episcopal Clergy, as their Ancestors the Pharisees were with the question about *John's* Baptism; for on the one side they feared the Court who desired and required them to be moderate, and indeed they perceived that it was their Interest at this time to make some shew of Moderation. But on the other hand it was against their Interest to condemn the Proceedings of the Presbyteries, nor could they do it because they

they were agreeable to the Rules concerted and prescribed by the general Meeting; so following the policy of the Pharisees they waded the difficulty by remitting all to the Commission and particular Synods. By this means they secured what was already done from being reversed, and also freed the Assembly from the blame of any Injury or Injustice done, or to be done; for then these things might be charged on particular Persons, and not on the whole Party. However they ventured upon three or four Processes, and by them you may guess what they would have done with the rest. The first was, That of Mr. *Lesk* Minister of *Turreff* within the Diocese of *Aberdeen*, whose Church was claimed by one Mr. *Arthur Mitchell* by virtue of that Act of Parliament, which restored the old Presbyterians to their Churches whether they were vacant or possessed by others. Mr. *Lesk* first made Application to the Council, and thought to have suspended Mr. *Mitchell*, as not being comprehended within the Act of Parliament, which only was designed in favour of these, who had left their Ministry for not complying with Episcopacy; whereas Mr. *Mitchell* was deposed, and deprived long before that time: But that not taking effect, the Matter was brought before the Assembly, where Mr. *Lesk* instructed, that Mr. *Arthur Mitchell* was never legally settled Minister of *Turreff*; that about the Year 1655. he was actually deposed, and that tho he continued to preach there by means of a prevailing Faction of Remonstrators under the Usurper, he was never look'd upon as Minister of the place: and that in the Year 60. the Synod of *Aberdeen* being freed of the force and restraint that was formerly upon them, did ratifie the former Sentence of Deposition. And as for himself he pleaded that he had been legally settled Minister according to the Laws of the Land, that he had submitted to the present Civil Government, which had promised protection to them who did so; and that the Heritors, and People of his Parish were for his continuance among them, and altogether averse to Mr. *Arthur Mitchell*. To prove this last, he produced

duced a Declaration and Petition subscribed by the Gentlemen and others of the Parish. Mr. *Mitchell* alledged that one or two of the Subscriptions were not genuine, and therefore that the whole ought to be neglected as a Forgery. Mr. *Lesk* replied, That he laid not the stress of this Cause on that Paper, that he only produc'd it as an Adminicle, that he had not gone about seeking Subscriptions, for he looked upon that as below the Character of a Minister; but that it was given him by honest Men, and therefore he had reason to believe the Subscriptions genuine. And if they laid any stress on the Inclinations of the People, if a competent time were allowed him, he would easily prove that they were for him; but at present it was to be considered whether he was legal and rightful Minister of that place. After two days debate it came to a Vote; and the Vote was not whether Mr. *Lesk* or Mr. *Mitchell* should be continued Minister at *Turreff*; but whether Mr. *Mitchell* was not rightful Minister Anno 1661. and only turned out by the unjust courses of the Times, and whether he was not now to be looked upon as rightful Minister there; which Vote was carried in the affirmative, and Mr. *Lesk* being called in, was told that the Assembly had deprived him, and ordained Mr. *Arthur Mitchell* to be Minister at *Turreff*. He asked the reasons of their Sentence, which were refused; but what ever might have been pretended, the true reason was, That they were glad of any pretence for casting out Episcopal Ministers, who were always in their Sermons and Discourses called the Priests of *Baal*. By virtue of that Act of Parliament I just now mentioned, all the Churches were taken from the Episcopal Ministers, to which any Presbyterian had the least pretence, tho the former had complied with the Civil Government, and the other were settled in other places which they were not resolved to leave. So for instance, Mr. *James Kirkton* who hath a Meeting-house in *Edinburgh*, and is called to be one of the Ministers of that City went out to the Parish of *Martine*, where he had been formerly Minister, and forced away Mr. *Andrew Meldrum* pre-

sent Minister without allowing him time to dispose of his Goods; and after he had performed this noble and heroick Exploit, and preached a Sunday or two to get a right to the Stipend, he returned to his Charge at *Edinburgh*, and turned his back upon that in the Country, as if there had been no more to be feared, seeing the Curate was driven away.

The next Appeal which I suppose was considered, was that of Mr. *Sleery* from the Presbytery of *Linlithgow*, he was a Minister of the West, who had been rabbled out of his own Church, and thereafter was desired by the Minister of *Falkirk* to serve his Cure during his Sickness, which he did; and when that Minister died, the Heritors and People of the Parish upon the experience they had of him, desired that he might continue to preach to them, promising that when the Government was settled, they would take care to get him a legal Title to the Parish: but it being firmly resolved on by all possible means to put out and disable all Episcopal Ministers; the Presbytery of *Linlithgow* caused the said Mr. *Sleery* to be cited before them, who compeiring, was interrogated by what Authority he preached at *Falkirk*, and how he came to use the Doxology. The last, he said, was the custom of the place, and that he did the first at the desire of the People. The Presbytery not being satisfied with his Answers to these, and some other Questions, discharged him from preaching there any longer, and declared the Church vacant, to which Sentence he refused to submit, and appealed; therefore it was necessary to interpose the Authority of the Assembly, for dispossessing him of that Church which was the reason why he was called upon. When he compeired, the Moderator askt him if he acknowledged the Civil Government, and if he would submit to that of the Church, to both which he answered affirmatively; but when it was askt him if he repented of his compliance with Episcopacy, he said, If it was a Sin he would repent of it. His Answer did neither please nor satisfy them; for the

Moderator

Moderator told him it seemed he yet doubted whether it was a Sin or not. So finding by this and some other things, that he was not yet a through Convert, they deprived him of his Church, and discharged him the Exercise of his Ministry.

A third Person brought before the Assembly was one Mr. *Forsyth* Minister at *St. Nivians*, he was accused for marrying a Man to his first Wives Neice, which he confessed before the Assembly; and also that he had been informed of the Relation, and dissuaded from doing it by the Episcopal Clergy, amongst whom he lived. All his excuse was, that he was not much himself when he did it, being in great confusion and consternation because of the Rabble that was then up, and who continually threatened him as they had fallen upon his Neighbour Ministers. And he further alledged, that it was the only miscarriage he could be charged with in thirty five Years Exercise of the Ministry, and therefore he desired the Assembly to pardon him, and to restore him. This they refused, and confirmed the Sentence of his Deposition, which was very just, and the only justifiable Act of the Assembly from its sitting down to its rising.

A fourth Affair which the Assembly had before them, was that of Mr. *John Mckenzie* at *Kirkliston*. I suppose you have seen an account of his Process before the Presbytery of *Linlithgow*, for he carried it up with him to *London* to shew it to his Friends there. But in case you have not met with him, nor received an account of the whole Matter, take it in short thus. When rabbling was practised and in fashion here, he amongst many others of his Brethren had the Church Doors shut against him, and by this means was hindred from the Exercise of his Ministry in that Parish; but having complied with the Civil Government, he made an interest by his Friends to

maintain his legal Right and Title to the said Church, which vexed and gall'd the Presbyterians, who by this means were kept from settling a Minister of their own Perswasion there. All endeavours were used to remove him: First, They set him upon him to dimit voluntarily, which he refusing, they next threatned to force him to it upon Articles of Scandal. But his Innocence, and unblameable Conversation being sufficient proof against that; they at last pursued him before the Presbytery of *Linthgow*, upon the pretence of deserting his People. He appeared before them, and defended himself, declaring he was always ready and willing to exercise his Ministry if the Rabble would have suffered him, and allowed him access to his Church, and therefore the fault did not lie at his door. Upon this he was blamed for speaking contemptibly of the Rabble who were said to be the *necessary Preliminaries to the Government both of Church and State*, and from that they would have been inferring his secret disaffection to both. The Presbytery were forced to vindicate him from all imputation of Scandal, and for a mark of their singular and extraordinary favour, they said they would give him recommendatory Letters to put him in capacity of being elected Minister of another Parish; but still they urg'd his quitting of that of *Kirkliston*: and when he perceived that they had firmly resolved to declare his Church vacant to gratifie the Rabble, and some few other unreasonable Persons who were dissatisfied with him, he appealed from them to the King, and the next lawfully called general Assembly. This being the Tenor of his Appeal, many of the Assembly spake against the receiving or sustaining it, alledging that it was not to them he appealed, for his expression did imply that this Assembly was not lawfully called, seeing it was called before he appealed, and yet he made no particular reference to it. Besides, said they, it's clear he means an Episcopal Assembly by his appealing to the King jointly

joynly with the Assembly; for these Episcopalsians do make the King the Head of the Church, whereas we cannot own any such thing. My Lord *Arbruchel* desired the Assembly to be favourable to him, for he knew him to be well affected to the Government, and that he had served the King abroad for the space of seven Years. To which one replied, *That he was as well paid for it: he served him for Wages, and so would he have done the Turk too.* They were much irritated by his going to *London* to represent their Proceedings, and to clamour against them; Every Man took occasion to vent his passion and pique at him; some said he was Scandalous, and called him a Drunkard and Swearer; some called him one thing, and some another, and one said he should be deposed because he was a proud, stubborn and insolent Fellow. The Commissioner apprehending there would be little Justice where there was so much pique and prejudice, desired the Moderator to delay the Affair, and to allow the young Man time to appear and answer for himself: but the Moderator replied, That it was best to proceed now, and more for the young Man's Reputation, for if he were present they would be obliged to take notice of some Crimes, and Scandals which now they would pass over without inquiring into them, forgetting that the Presbytery had acquitted him of all such Guilt, and that he himself had given him a good Testimony when the Affair was first brought before the Assembly. The Commissioner still urging that they would deal tenderly and gently with him; Indeed (replied the Moderator) *Your Grace shall find that we will use great tenderness towards the Young Man, and we shall be very discreet, for we shall only take his Kirk from him, which they did immediately.* So that you have a Sample of the Presbyterian Tenderness, which I think is very near a Kin to the tender Mercies of the Wicked, which *Solomon* declareth to be cruel; for when they deprive one of his Livelihood and Good-name, they

call

call it Tenderness; and if it be so, I pray God save us from their Cruelty.

Except these four, I heard of no other Processes where in the Episcopal Clergy were concerned, that were revised and discussed before the Assembly, there were indeed one or two more mentioned, by the Interest made by the Persons concerned: || As the Business of Mr. *Herriot* in *Dalkeith*, and Mr. *Wood* in *Dumbar*, but they with the rest were referred back to particular Synods and Presbyteries.

|| *Vid. second Paper.*

All this while the Presbyterians had been intent upon the emptying of Churches, now at last they began to consider how Churches should be filled, and Vacancies supplied. They wanted Labourers for their Harvest, and therefore they first passed an Act, For calling home such of their Party as were serving in other places abroad; and appointed the drawing up, and directing of Letters for acquainting those in *Holland* particularly with the Mind of the Assembly and the Necessity of the Church: It happened that of these who were spoken of, one was dead, and another detained Prisoner in *Dunkirk*. Wherefore one said at the reading of the Letter, That the Assembly needed the Power of Miracles, for bringing back the one, and that they ought to address to the *French King*, to obtain the other. In the next place for the encreasing the number of the Brethren, they appointed some to search out, and to give in Lists of such as were thought fit to be called to the Ministry. And indeed they may come to have enough of them, by the Measures and Methods which they lay down and follow; but they are not like to have many learned and knowing men; for they set light of Learning and Knowledge, and do often run it down: *Zeal for the Good Cause* is the chief Qualification, and serves instead of Learning and other Accomplishments.

plishments. The Episcopal Candidates are thought as dangerous as those who are actually in Office: Therefore instead of these who have been several years fitting themselves for the holy Ministry by proper and useful Studies, they are putting others upon the Design who never studied at all, neither have any competent measure of Learning for it. Brewers and illiterate Tradesmen are setting up to be Ministers. Not to trouble you with other Instances; one *Russel* a Coalgrieve in *Fife* is made Minister at *Kennaway*: What Talent of Learning he has you may easily guess, when you may understand that he is altogether ignorant of the Latine: When he was passing his Tryals before the Presbytery, they according to their Custom prescribed him a Latine Exercise in some Head of Divinity, which he earnestly declined; and when they would needs keep up the Formality, he complained for obliging him to pray and preach in an unknown Tongue: Having miserably bungled through the Discourse, when it came to the Disputes, Mr. *Mitchel* at *Leslie* proposed an Argument by way of *Enthymema*, and he denyed the Major, having been at pairs to com the Terms *Major* and *Minor* before he came there, and his Instructor having forgot to tell him the different ways of Argumentation: Then Mr. *Mitchel* putting his Terms in the ordinary form of an Hypothesick Syllogism, fancying he might understand that: When the Syllogism was repeated he said to the Proponent *explica terminos Minoris*, which was *Sed verum prius*. Having gotten this Specimen of his Learning, the Presbytery acknowledged that he indeed wanted Gifts, but he had Grace, and that was sufficient; and therefore they approved of him and received him into the Ministry. Mr. *Russel* hearing that he was so much upbraided with Ignorance, to wipe off that Stain, he offered to make some Ostentation of Learning in a Sermon, by the Repetition of a Latine Verse. The Verse he chose was this common one; *Regis ad Exemplum*

Exemplum, &c. But alas, the Way he took to save his Reputation ruined it for ever, for he blundered it thus,

Regos ad Exemplas totis componitur orbos.

And as their Clergy are at present without Learning, so it cannot be expected that their Successors (if they shall have any) will be any whit better; for they have laid our Colleges waste, driven away our learned men, and have not qualified Persons of their own party to put in their places. The University of *S. Andrew* is altogether laid waste, there is neither Principal nor Regent there, and those who have succeeded to the Vacancies in the Colleges of *Glasgow* and *Edinburgh* are known to be Persons neither skilled in Books, nor any part of good and useful Learning: So that they are not capable of directing the Studies of the Youth which resort thither; nor is it to be supposed the Youth will much regard their Advices, when 'tis evident that the chief of them have need to be put back to learn their Grammar. The Narrowness of the Presbyterian Spirit is an Enemy to Knowledg, and will obstruct all Learning; for they not only count it Impiety to call their commonly received Principles into Question, but also they reckon a free and rational Inquiry into the Grounds and Reasons of them to be very dangerous: They are no less friends to implicate Faith, than the Church of *Rome*, and do not regard the Advice of *S. Peter*, which is, *That we should be ready always to give an Answer to every man that asketh a Reason of the Hope that is in us.* You may easily guess how squeamish they are about Points of Divinity, when they make the *Cartesian*, and other Systems of new Philosophy to be gross and damnable Heresies.

So that if Presbyterianism prevail, all freedom of Spirit, all improvements of reason and knowledge will be banish'd, and the world must be condemned again to hear both in Schools and Pulpits impertinent chat, a Clutter Clutter of words and canting phrases which cannot be understood. They are great enemies to Mr. *Gregory* the Learned Professor of Mathematicks in this place, they seek by all means to turn him out, and say that these Sciences are not only useles but dangerous: and indeed they have reason, for they are no friends to ignorance and nonsense their peculiar properties. But the want of kindness to Mr *Gregory*, and the Mathematicks is somewhat more excusable in them; but that they should slight the knowledge of the Hebrew, and other orientall tongues is a little strange, and cannot be justified seeing the right understanding of the Scripture does so much depend thereupon. They have thrust out Mr. *Alexander Douglass* the professor of these languages here, who as he was a person of a most peaceable disposition, so he was an ornament to the Society he lived in by his skill and knowledge in these matters: he cannot have a true Successor here, for he hath scarce his equal in this Kingdom, nor Perhaps are there many in other places who do exceed him in the thing he professeth. But perhaps the Jewish Synagogue would have been found so favourable for Episcopacie, and therefore it is fit and wisely done to keep both Clergy & Laity in ignorance of it. Their kindness for the dead is as smal as for the living & they encourage learned books as little as learned men. The trade of books is fallen so low since the Presbyterian reign was set up, that our Stationers are thinking either to quit their employments, or to go and live elsewhere, for they have not made the rent of their shops these two years. The Episcopall are not in circumstances for buying and the other crave no other books then *Darham* on the *Canticles* and *Revelation*, *Dickson* and *Hutcheson*, *Dyar* and *Gray*, These are their Classicall Authors and the standard of their learning: and 'tis from those that they take the heads of their Sermons, and the instructions which they tender the people. But tho' learning be not the talent

of a Presbyterian, yet they have arrogated to themselves the gift of preaching; they have the name of Powerfull Soul-searching-Preachers: whereas the Episcopall Ministers are only named dry moral Lecturers, and under this name flouted and abused both in Sermons and prayers.

So vain were they of this gift of preaching that for some time we had a new Sermon published by them every week; they thinking thereby to gain and profelitate the whole nation, But the Stratageme failed them, nay it prov'd to their prejudice; for thereby peoples curiosity was diverted from hearing them in the Churches, where they could not expect other than noise and nonsense, seeing there was so much babble & in their printed, & consequently more deliberate discourses. An acquaintance of yours hath made a rare Collection of notes of their Sermons both printed and unprinted. To which I refer you for instances to prove the truth of what I have been saying: The last Sermon that was published came forth the first week of the Afs. The Author is one Mr. *James Clark* who preached in the meeting house at *Dumbar*. It was a Sermon *ad Clerum*; preached, as was said, at the deposing of the Parson of *Old-Hamstocks*, which being an extraordinary Occasion, something better then ordinary, was expected: but there never appeared a more silly and empty discourse, nor is it possible that you can conceive so meanly of it, as it deserves. It was even far below Mr. *Andrew Gray's* Sermons. The very Presbyterians whose gust craves no fine things, were ashamed of it. My Lord *Crawford* to excuse it laid the blame on the Printer and complained of him at the Councill-Table, for offering to publish it without a License, alledging also that it was without the Authors consent, and that the Copy was an imperfect uncorrect one, which some ignorant or malicious person had taken from the Authors Mouth: But when the Printer was examined, he produced an Authentick copy from the Author himself, and declared that he revised the sheets as they came from the Press, so the Printer was free of the faults that were in it, and they could be only charged on Mr. *Clark*, who it's believed shew'd all the learning and eloquence he was Master of.

But

But it is fit now we return to the As. and give you an account of what acts they pass'd for regulating the discipline of the Church for the future. The first of this kinde and the first also of any other that pass'd in the As. was an Act against marriages without publick proclamations; as also against the private administration of the two Sacraments, Baptisme and the Lords Supper. Mr. Gilbert Rule press'd that the Sacrament of Baptisme might not at all be administred but in publick and *after Sermon, and called the private administration* not only Superstitious but also Sorcerie and Charming, and said further that the same was contrary to Scripture and Antiquity. Mr. Kirkton took him up briskly and said that was disputable, that he could buckle him, on any man upon that point, but would not debate it now. He added that by their rigorous imposition of indifferents things he had lost five men of considerable note the last week, And concluded tho' there were a thousand acts against it, he would rather Baptize in private then suffer the Children to go to the Curates. Some Highland Ministers craved that they might not be lyable to that act because it was impossible to bring all the Children of their parishes to the Kirks by reason of the vast distance some of their people lived at from them; but whether they intend to give a dispensation was not expressed. The Moderator to excuse their own practises heretofore said, *there was a distinction both of times and places, for, said he, in times of Persecution I think an honest Minister riding on the way, may go into a mans house, Baptize a Bairn and come out and take his horse again.* Tho' while they were under restraint, they made no Scruple of baptizing privately the children of those of their own perswasion, yet now they refuse to baptize any except in publick; nor will they do it but when there is a Sermon: and they are so strict upon the point that they suffer the children to dye rather then slacken their rigour. In the Country the benefit of Baptisme can be only had on Sundays because then only there is preaching; and if Children cannot live so long they must take their hazard of departing without that sign and Seal of their Salvation. I know a Parish where two or three persons importuned the Minister to baptize their

Children publickly or privately as he pleased : but he peremptorily refused to do it on a week-day, tho' they who intended to have been present at the baptisme would have made a competent number for an ordinary Country Sermon, and before Sunday two of the Children dyed : we had lately in this City a more notable instance of the stiffness of their humour in this particular. A Certain Citizen designed to have his child baptized on a week day at the ordinary time of Sermon: he with the Gossips came in time enough to the Church, but because the child was brought in about the close of the Sermon, neither Mr. *Kennedy* who preached, nor Mr. *Ers- kine* the Minister of the parish could be prevailed with to administer the Sacrament to the Infant, but they caused it to be carried home again without baptism. The people generally take this very ill, and are very much displeased with the Presbyterian Ministers on this account. Wherefore to justify themselves, they frequently preach against the necessity of Baptism, and to talk of it as if it were an ordinance neither necessary nor much to be regarded, and do account the esteem and value which is ordinarily put upon it, and earnest desires the people have after it, to be the dregs and reliques of Popery among us. When a child was brought to Mr. *Kirkton* he took occasion to shew the Superstition of that Ceremony, and said to the People, you think it necessary to have your Children Baptized, but I tell you (said he) I know a good Godly Minister who lived till he was fourscore that was never Baptized all his life time.

In the next place, they renewed an Act of a Generall Assembly appointing Pedagogues, Chaplains, Preachers, and Students to take and subscribe the Confession of faith ; and further they Commissionated some to draw up a list of all these acts of Assemblies which were fit to to be observed and put in use, wherein they acted very cunningly, for tho' it be well known that they receive all the acts of Assemblies as if they were Scripture, and pay no less regard to them ; yet because some of these inroach upon the power of the Civil Magistrate , Therefore to prevent the Jealousies of the King they

they would not make a generall Act ratifying and approving them in *Cumulo*, nor yet would they condemn or censure any of them. But they enforced such as were proper and suitable to the present state of affairs, and waved the declaration of their sentiments concerning the rest.

Fourthly, because the As. could not sit so long as was necessary to determine all particulars and to give rules and measures for the settling of the Church in this juncture, nor was it fit it should do it ; Therefore they resolved to chuse a Committee who might sit after the dissolution of the As. who should have full and Supream Power to Act in all things that related to the Church. It's said, that this overture was first made by the Moderate men, who thought by this means to reduce affairs to a better temper than the As. was like to do, by reason of the many rigid and indiscreet men who were in it. Therefore six were proposed to be a part of this Committee, and to name the other Persons of whom the Committee should consist. Four of these six went under the Character of Moderate men, the other two were of another temper, and were joyned to them on purpose to prevent suspicion : But the High flown Brethren soon smell'd out the design, and therefore they first Voted two more of their own side, and because that only put them in *equilibrio*, they again got four more to be added, so that they were double the number of the other, and by this means the Committee consisted most part of the strictest and most rigid Presbyterians, Their Names are as follow,

For the South.
Ministers.

<i>John Veitch</i>	<i>William Erskine</i>	<i>George Campbell</i>
<i>Gab. Simple</i>	<i>William Weir</i>	<i>James Lawrie</i>
<i>Gilbert Rule</i>	<i>Alex. Pitcairn</i>	<i>Archibald Hamilton</i>
M. <i>James Kirkton</i>	M. <i>Richard Howison</i>	M. <i>Patrick Peacock</i>
<i>Fohn Spalding</i>	<i>James Veitch</i>	<i>Rob. Duncanson</i>
<i>Michael Bruce</i>	<i>Patrick Simpson</i>	<i>John Balandine</i>
<i>Gab. Cuninghame</i>	<i>Mathew Crawford</i>	<i>William Ker</i>

Patrick

<i>Patrick Venier</i>	<i>Neil Gisleß</i>	<i>William Pindin</i>
<i>M. John Hutchison</i>	<i>M. Andrew Morton</i>	<i>M. David Blair</i>
<i>William Eccles</i>	<i>Thomas Forrester</i>	<i>Samuel Nairn</i>
	Elders.	
<i>Earle of Cranford</i>	<i>Sir John Hall</i>	<i>Coltness</i>
<i>Earle Sutherland</i>	<i>Sir James Riddel</i>	<i>Glanderston</i>
<i>Visc. of Arburthmet</i>	<i>Balife Muir Lairds</i>	<i>Lammington [Air</i>
<i>La. Hallcraig</i>	<i>Balife Macklurg</i>	<i>John Muir provost of</i>
<i>Laird of Ormestone</i>	<i>George Stirling</i>	<i>Hamilton of Grange</i>
	For the North.	
	Ministers.	
<i>John Law</i>	<i>William Legget</i>	<i>James Rymer</i>
<i>Hugh Kennedy</i>	<i>Robert Rule</i>	<i>Thomas Ramsay</i>
<i>M. Will. Crichton</i>	<i>M. James Frazer</i>	<i>M. Robert Young</i>
<i>John Anderson</i>	<i>Geo. Meldrum</i>	<i>William Mack</i>
<i>Alex. Forbes</i>	<i>Edward Jenson</i>	<i>Andrew Buey</i>
	Elders.	
<i>La. Ardbrachill</i>	<i>Naughton</i>	<i>Lewchatt</i>
<i>Green know</i>	<i>Meggins</i>	

Afterwards it being represented that the Visitors for the North were too few, there were added these following

Ministers.

<i>James Stewart</i>	<i>Hugh Anderson</i>	<i>Arthur Mitchel</i>
<i>James Urquhart</i>	<i>William Machay</i>	<i>William Ramsay</i>
<i>M. Alex. Dumber</i>	<i>M. Walter Denune</i>	<i>M. Francis Melvil</i>
<i>Alex. Frazer</i>	<i>Geo. Meldrum at Glasg</i>	<i>John Maccollork</i>
<i>Thomas Hog</i>		

Elders.

<i>Brodie</i>	<i>Colloden</i>	<i>Sir George Monro Embo</i>
<i>Grant</i>	<i>Dalfolly</i>	<i>Sir David Frazer</i>
<i>Grange Dumber</i>	<i>Parkhay</i>	<i>M. John Campbell of Moye</i>
<i>Eight</i>	<i>Sir John Monro</i>	

This Committee was appointed to keep quarterly Sessions viz. on the third *Wednesday* of *January*, and the third *Wednesday* of *April*, and to appoint afterwards their meetings as often as they shall think fit. That a *Quorum* should be ten Ministers and five ruling-Elders, and they were allowed to choose

choose their own Moderator, and Clerk. The Instructions prepared for them by the Committee for overtures, were first read and debated on *Thursday* before the Afs. rose, but they were not agreed to till the *Tuesday* thereafter. On *Monday* they were read with some alterations: but Mr. *Kirkton* and a great many more adhered to the exceptions which they made at the first Reading, and said, that the Alterations were not considerable. He alledged also, that what was then read was not a true Copy of that which the Committee had agreed to, and offered to the Moderator a true double of it, but the Moderator refused it, saying, he knew nothing of the matter: and because the Afs. was not like to come to an agreement at that time, therefore the matter was referred back again to the Committee, and all who had any thing to say about it were appointed to attend them. The next day it was brought back again to the Afs. and concluded; Mr. *Kirkton* and some others who press'd alterations being absent. To satisfy your, and my own curiosity I used means to procure a Copy of the instructions, and got them with some difficulty which I here set down.

Instructions for the Committee or Commission of the Kirk.

First, they are to take into their Cognizance all references and appeals not discuss'd in the Assembly and such matters as have been stated before the Afs. and referred to them, and to discuss and determine the same.

Secondly, they are to give their advice to all Synods and Presbyteries when required, and tho' not required, yet upon information of any irregularity or precipitancy of proceedings in Presbyteries they are to interpose their advice for sitting processes till the next Synod or Afs.

When this 2d. Article was read, some asked if the Commission had power to call before themselves any business, and to take the same out of the hands of Presbyteries. To which the Moderator answered, no: but they are only to give their advice, and said he, I think no Presbytery will refuse it, which

• which if they do, it must be *Cum periculo*, and the Church of Scotland will be free from any imputation of their actions.

Thirdly, they are to have power to visit all Ministers in Presbyteries as well Presbyterian as others.

Fourthly, they are to purge out of the Church all who upon due tryall shall be found insufficient, Scandalous, Erroneous or *supinely negligent*.

It was moved that the words *supinely negligent* might be left out, but the same was refused.

Fifthly, they are to be carefull that none be admitted by them to Ministerial Communion, or to a share in the Government, but such as upon due tryall (for which the visitors shall take a competent time) shall be found to be Orthodox in their doctrine, of competent abilities, having a pious, Godly and peaceable Conversation as becometh a Minister of the Gospel, of an edifying gift, and whom the Commission shall have ground to believe will be faithfull to God and the Government, and diligent in the discharge of their Ministerial duty, and that all who shall be admitted to the Ministry or shall be received into a share of the Government shall be obliged to own and subscribe the Confession of Faith; and to profess their submission and willingness to joyn and concur with the Presbyterian Church-Government.

At first it was Presbyterian communion, and only faithful to the Government. Mr. *Kirkton* said that this Article was a matter of very great consequence, and desired it might be well considered, for *in hoc vertitur fortuna Scotia*, and complained that there was not one word of the Scandal of conforming, which he said was the greatest of all Scandals. Mr. *Frazer* of *Brae* proposed that the clause of repentance might be inserted; The Moderator answered, that in effect it was there already, if they look't upon the Commissioners as discreet and Judicious men; for so (said he) they will admit none without repentance, for without that they cannot have ground to believe that ever they will be faithfull to the Government. Mr. *Kirkton* replied, that they could never be sure of Episcopall Ministers, for many of them (says he) has changed three or

four times already, and they will do it at every turn: Mr. William Weir moved that they might be obliged to declare that they should neither by advice nor any other way endeavour the alteration of the Presbyterian Government.

Sixthly, that they be very Cautious in receiving Informations, and forming Libels against the late Conformists, and present Incumbents, and that they proceed in the matter of censure very deliberately, so as that none may have just cause to complain of their rigidity, yet so as to omit no means of information, and that they shall not proceed to censure but upon relevant Libels and sufficient probations.

Seventhly, that this Commission do not meddle in publick affairs or in any thing not expressed in their Commission, which is hereby declared to be given them *in hunc finem* only & *pro presenti Ecclesia statum*.

Eighthly, they shall be answerable, and censurable by the next Generall Assembly, and shall continue till the first of Nov. next, if there be no Generall Ass. before that time.

By these Instructions it appears that the Committee was mainly designed against the Episcopal Clergy, who as yet kept their places because of their compliance with the Civil Government. Presbyterians can never be brought to have true kindness for Episcopal Ministers had they never so many recommendations for their parts, piety, or their Interest in the favour of great men. But on all occasions they do draw back from them, and do refuse to concur with them in advancing even the Common ends of Religion and truth. And at this time they not only had an aversion to them on the account of their different principles, but also they were afraid to receive them into their communion, and especially into a share of the Government, because the Episcopal Clergy was double their number, and therefore it was dangerous to admit them, lest by the plurality of their number on some fit occasion they should forge a change of the Government. They considered that the Compliance and submission to Presbyterian Government, which such would give at this time, would not be free and willing, but only out of a necessity to serve the present Turn till they should be better stated: Wherefore either to revenge them-

selves upon the Enemies of their Government, or the better to secure it, it was from the very first resolved upon to lay aside all Episcopal Ministers, unless they evidently testified a change of mind as well as of outward behaviour. But how to compass this was the difficulty, for a direct Act for this would make their design plain and shew their malice bare-faced, it would increase the Clamours and Prejudices of the people, nor could the state in Equity suffer it to pass. The only expedient then was, to do it by some indirect by-blow, by putting something to them which they could not do, & by this means render them lyable to their censures, or which, if they did, would prostitute their reputation with the people, & turn them odious as men of no Principles, Honesty, or Steadfastness. And as they envied them their reputation and favour, so they thought if they could bring them to forfeit that, there would be little difficulty in turning them out, neither needed they fear the doing of it as occasion offered. It was observed that the Falls formerly appointed went ill away with the Episcopal Clergy; some Ministers would not observe them at all, others would not read the Proclamation appointing them, because of some insinuations which reflected on Episcopacy, and those who complied with it, and generally the people censured those who read & observed the same.

Another Fast therefore more plain and particular than the former was thought the fittest Stratagem for procuring the ruine of the Episcopal Clergy. The motion was no sooner proposed then entertained, and a Committee appointed for the drawing up the reasons of it, which were publicly read in the Assembly Novemb. 11th. When the Clerk had done, the Moderator said, *Brethren, this is a Savoury Paper, Indeed it is a most Savoury Paper, and worthy to be heard over again.* After a second reading, Mr Fraser of Arde asked who was to observe the same, whether Presbyterian Ministers or Curates also. *Brother,* said the Moderator, *that is not timely stated, for we must first consider the thing, and conclude that, and then we shall consider the persons who shall observe it.* Others said, that what Mr. Fraser had proposed ought first to be considered. When they had for some time exercised their wit about the reasons of the Fast, and the way of wording it, the Moderator ask'd the Commissioner if his Grace had any thing to say about it, who answered, yes, and therefore

therefore desired it might be delayed till the next day, which was accordingly done: the next day being the 1st of Nov: the business of the Fast was again brought before the Afs. and the paper containing the reasons of it read with this alteration, that *The Declaration, Oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy, and Test, and some such particulars were left out*: It would seem that the Commissioners refused to suffer it to pass if these had been expressly mentioned: wherefore to get the Commissioner to condescend to the thing, they dash out the names: But he is an ignorant reader, and has little skill in spelling who doth not perceive that they are all couched & implied. So this day the reasons were approved, and an Act pass'd, requiring all persons throughout the Kingdom whether in Kirks or Meeting houses punctually to observe the same. I should detain you too long, if I should give you an account of the reasons here, and pass observations thereon: I shall rather to send you the paper itself that you may see it and consider it with your own eyes, and at the first view of it you may be convinced how choking it will be to the Episcopal Clergy, who can neither in credit or conscience observe it; nor can any who are less interred in the Episcopal Government go along with it, unless they could be persuaded that Episcopacy, is not only unlawful but the cause and occasion of much wickedness and impiety, and the setting it up is to apostatize from God, & to make Defection from the truth. None can observe this fast for the reasons enjoined, but at the same time they must condemn the Church of England and other Protestant Churches, nay the Catholick Church of Christ from the Apostles days down to *Calvin*. The Afs. understood well enough how contrary the design and reasons of this fast were to the sentiments of those who were commanded to observe it, & that they could not keep it without being guilty of the greatest Hypocrisy and mocking of God: and therefore for them, for their own particular ends, to require men thus to mock God and play the Hypocrite, was a horrid and most unjustifiable piece of villainy: this shews that they fast for strife and envy, and not to please God, but to annoy men, not to avert the Divine Judgements but that they may have occasion of executing their wrath and malice under the Colour and shadow of zeal against Sin. With the Act of the Afs. for the fast

I have sent you also the act of Council annexing the Civil Sanction to it procured by my Lord *Crawford's* means; and *Vide the last Paper.* I desire you to take Notice of the Close of it, where the Observation of the Fast is Urged out of fear of Gods wrath, and after that is subjoyned the highest perils from them, which some said was like the Proclamations of one *Borthwick* sometimes a Bayliff in this City, which were wont to be under the pain of death, and fourty Pound besides. The mentioning of these printed Acts brings to my Memory a passage of the Printer; Some in hopes of getting gain thereby Petitioned the As. for the gift of publishing their Acts. Mrs. *Anderson* claim'd the privilege by virtue of a gift from the King to print all publick Acts and Proclamations; and withall she might have deserved such a favour from them having ever heretofore Favoured their Party, and allowed them the use of her Press for publishing their Pamphlets, and even such as durst not be well avowed. But either because they would have a Printer of their own distinct from the Kings, or that they would not shew kindness to her, who had accession to the guilt of the late Reigns, by printing their sinfull Acts and Proclamations; for one or both these Reasons they denied her the Favour, and bestowed it on *George Mosman* who represented in his Petition, that he was not only always a true friend to their Interest, but also a sufferer for the Cause. And it's true he was ever Whig enough, but what his Sufferings were it is not well known, seeing he ever lived peaceably at *Edenburgh*, and had the freedome of a good trade, whereby he is become Fat every way. Other men sole by their Sufferings, but they gain by theirs even in this life. So Mr. *Fohnston* died two Thousand pound Sterling rich who was not worth forty or fifty pound when he left his charge. Tho' Mrs. *Anderson* was repulsed by the As, yet she would not give over, but next tried her Interest with the Council, that at least she might have the printing of those Acts which had the Civil Sanction added to them, they being comprehended within her gift. *Crawford* who thinks all the Acts of the Presbyterians should be like the Laws of the *Modes and Persons* stood up for *Mosman*, others pleaded Mrs. *Anderson's* right, it not being in the power of the Council, far less of the As. to take away their right and property or any part of it. But one said smartly, that

that the Case should be stated, not betwixt Mrs. *Anderson* and *Mosman*, but betwixt the King and the Afs. whether the King should yield to the Afs. or the Afs. to the King. My Lord *Crawford* thought the first no absurdity, and offered to produce instances of it in former times. But the rest of the Councillors thought they were obliged in Civility to prefer the King, and so Mrs. *Anderson* carried it.

I believe I may have wearied you with the length of my Letter, I crave pardon only to add two or three particulars more, and I shall close. The first was, their appointing an answer to be made to the printed accounts of the persecution of the Episcopal Clergy in this Kingdom. At the generall meeting it was laid on Mr. *Meldrum* who declin'd it. Then it was recommended to Mr. *Alexander Pitcairine* who did nothing in it. He excused himself before the Afs. in that he knew not the matters of fact and the true Information was not sent him. The Afs. ordered him again to go on in it, and appointed Mr. *Gilbert Rale*, and some others to assist him in the work, and required all the members to furnish them with Instructions proper for it. Mr. *Meldrum* in a Sermon before the Afs. offered to justify the barbarities of the Rabble, and the ill usage which the Episcopal Clergy met with, alledging that their errors, vices and scandals deserve no better at the peoples hands: But what Justification & defence will be made by those who are appointed to do it, in name of the Afs. I do not know, but this I am confident, that they will never prove any material circumstance in matter of fact to be false.

A Second particular I am to make you acquainted with, is an Act for taking off the sentence of deposition which was pronounced against some Ministers, especially those of the Remonstrators party anno 1660. I told you before that it had been proposed at the General meeting, but was then laid aside by reason of the mistakes that were like to arise among the Brethren about it. Now the Moderator who was mainly concerned in the business finding himself a little better stated made an overture of it to the Afs. the day it was dissolved and to obtain it the more easily, he brought it in by way of a surprise. Brethren, said he, you may remember there were once some unhappy differences among us, which some carried so high as to proceed to inflict the sentence of deposition upon some on that account;

now I think it fit before we part, that this sentence be revoked; that as we are all one mans bairns, some may be all alike stated. Mr. Gilbert Rato replied, that he judged it better to bury these matters in oblivion, that they could not pass a generall Act for re-poning these men without re-examining their processe, which was no ways fit; & perhaps they would not be found all alike, for some might be deposed for Scandall and other Crimes, and not only for these unhappy heats and differences. The Moderator answered him, *Brother, there is no need of condescending on particulars, and I believe they will be found all alike, and that they are all very honest men that are concerned.* So he named Mr. Kier and some others, and among the rest himself in the third person, saying, *There is one Mr. Hugh Kennedy, whom I warrant you ken all well enough.* To conclude, the Act passed, the sentence of deposition lying upon these persons was made void, and they declared to be true and lawfull Ministers. And herein truly the Moderators wit fail'd him; for instead of righting himself which he designed, he raised objections against himself which otherwise would have been forgotten; and by this Act brought an indelible rash both upon his own publick Ministry, these two three years, and also upon the present Ass. in that the Moderator and many of its members were both legally, and Canonically incapable. Now that they hear this, they pretend that the sentence was taken off formerly, and that the Ass. only ratified and confirmed what was formerly done in these mens favour, and that it was usual to ratify in the first Generall Ass. the Acts of inferiour Judicatories. But as they cannot instance the time nor the meeting in which these persons were reponed, so they never had any proper or avowed meeting for such a business till the Indulgence granted by King James; and we never heard it so much as proposed before in any of their avowed meetings till the last generall one as was already declared; and either the sentence lying upon these persons was valid or not. If it was not, then what needd such a solemn revulling of it by an Act of the Generall Ass. But if it was valid, then the Ass. approved of men who were condemnations to the discipline & government of their own Church; for they received such to be members of the Ass. and also chooped one of that Gang to preside in it, whatever may be said as to the deposition of these

these men; if it was found expedient that the Aſs. ſhould paſs a Verdict on it; it had been prudent and proper to have done it before their admission as members; and if the Credit of the Aſs. had been regarded, they would not have choſen a Moderator againſt whom there was ſuch a conſiderable exception: certainly a leſs reaſon may invalidate the Authority of the Aſs. ſender it unlawful and unworthy to be owned and ſubmitted to.

The laſt particular I ſhall trouble you with is about the chooſing Commiſſioners to go from the Aſs. to the King to make a true representation of their proceedings, to intreat the continuance of his favour, and to vindicate themſelves from the aſperſions of their enemies. It is ſaid that Mr. *Carstairs* whom the king had ſent down with letters, of inſtruction to the Aſs. expected that they would have honoured him with that truſt, but whether it was out of any Jealouſy of his conduct or faithfullneſs or if it was to gratify others who might have had particular deſigns of their own they paſſed by Mr. *Carstairs*, and gave the Employment to Mr. *Gilbert Rule* and Mr. *David Blair*. The firſt I have often had occaſion to mention, the other preached in a meeting houſe here; he is ſaid to be not ſo coarſe but ſomething better Polished than other common Presbyterians: He is ſon to Mr. *Robert Blair* Miniſter at St. *Andrews*, who was famous for many things but eſpecially his Civility to King *Charles the 2d.* when he made him a viſit at his own houſe. Mr. *Blair* when the King came in was ſitting in a Chair, and it ſeems at the time under a bodily infirmity which both kept him from riſing and excuſed it, when Miſ. *Blair* ran to to fetch a Chair to the King, he ſaid, *My heart do not trouble your ſelf, he is a young man he may draw in one to himſelf.*

At laſt I come to the diſſolution of the Aſſembly, which was talked of ſeverall days before, and at laſt concluded and reſolved upon Nov. 13. Their laſt Sederunt was in the afternoon, and continued till it was night. There they debated the calling of another Aſs. and the time of its ſitting; ſome were for one month, ſome were for another, and there were few months of the year but was favoured by one or other as fitteſt for an Aſs. In the middeſt of theſe debates among themſelves, the Commiſſioner (whoſe adviſe they never ſought in the affair) ſtood up and diſſolved them in the Kings name, and by the ſame Authority called and appointed another to meet on the firſt of Nov. next to come, 1691. The Aſſembly was Surprized with this, but it would ſeem they thought not fit to call it in queſtion, therefore they ſubmitted: and all was concluded with a prayer and Pſalm: The Pſalm they Sung was the 133.

Thus ended our famous Aſſembly: an account whereof I have given you as fully and exactly as I could: I was not overhaſty to believe any information till I found it confirmed by two or three others: If I be miſtaken in ſome ſmall circumſtances, which the beſt Hiſtorians may erre in;

I am

I am sure no material falshood can be charged upon me, Let it be no prejudice against the truth of my relation, that I sometimes appear no friend to the Party; but tho' I be not, I will not willingly and wittingly lye upon them. I need not assure you of my loyalty who knows that I hate to utter a lye, either for advancing the best cause or destroying the worst. But I confess I can hardly bridle my passion when I consider the error and injustice, the unreasonableness and Hypocrisy which these people are guilty of, who if you will take their word for it are the only true Godly, and who only have a sense of Religion and the practise of it: but I am confident neither Church nor Religion will prosper till that Spirit be cast out which possesses them. I pray God convert them, and let out much of his Spirit upon them, and all others, that our Land may have peace, and that the divisions of our Church may be healed; that our Confusions may be wholly removed, and order and good Government restored, and that the worship of God may be duly and decently performed as may best tend to the advancement of his Glory, and the good and Edification of the Souls of his people, with this prayer for the Church, and my hearty wishes for your self, I take my leave at this time.

December 1690.

F I N I S.

This is the exact Copy of the Information and Petition given in by *Mr. Heriot, Minister of Dalkeith*, in Print, to the Privy Council at *Edenburgh*.

INFORMATION

FOR

**Mr. ALEXANDER HERIOT, Minister at
DALKEITH.**

In Relation to the Label against him, before the Presbytery at Dalkeith, and the Sentences thereon. And Petitions to the Lords of Their M^{aj} JESTIES Privy Council.

The Appeal given in by the said Mr. Alexander Heriot to the Synod of Midlothian, containing a short Information of the Progress of that Process, to that time, is as follows.

Moderator, Being conscious of my Innocence, and finding my self Wronged, and Injured, I here appeal from this Synod, to the first General Assembly, when it shall meet: and in the mean time to their Majesties Protection, for Justice and Relief; And since the Law allows the Ledges a competent time to give in the Reasons of their appeals, I here Protest within Twenty four hours, to give in the Reasons of this my appeal to your Clerk; And withall, I protest that this be Recorded by him. And upon all I take Instruments.

The Reasons of Appeal of Mr. Alexander Heriot Minister at Dalkeith, from the Synod of Midlothian, to the next Lawfull General Assembly, And to their M^{aj} JESTIES Protection for Justice, and Relief in the mean time.

THERE being an Indictment given in to the Presbytery of *Dalkeith* against the said *Mr. Alexander Heriot*, and the Label bearing it to be given in in the Name of the Parochiners, the said

Mr. Alexander Heriot and Parochiners compeered, and craved that his accusers might be named to him, and that they might subscribe their Charge against him; And that in regard that the said Heritors and Parochiners did not only *Viva Vice*, but by a Write under their Hands Disclaim and Disown it, except *Alexander Calderwood*, and a few others, *ex facie populi*. And albeit no Libel ought to be admitted without a Pursuer; Yet the Presbytery refused to condescend upon the Injurers of the Libel, or to ordain them to own and subscribe it. Like as, none had the Confidence to own it, except the said *Alexander Calderwood*, who sat among them as one of the Ruling Elders, and who is notoriously known to be the said *Mr. Alexander Heriot's* declared Enemy (although without cause) and who invented and reported most false Calumnies against him, of which when he was challenged, his answer was, That whether they were true or false, he had thereupon taken two hundred of the Parochiners from his Communion;

munion; Mr. Heriot declined him as Judge in this matter, wherein he both informed and accused; which not only consisted in the knowledge of the Presbytery (who had no other Information but his) but which was likewise offered to be proved by his Oath; yet notwithstanding thereof, against all Law, Reason, and good Order, the Presbytery would not remove him, but allowed him to sit as one of Mr. Heriot's Judges, and appointed him one of the Examinators of the Witnesses: and he forgetting that station, informed and tampered with some of them, and threatened others, as to what they should depone; and the Witnesses being overawed and interrupted in their Examinations, and not allowed to declare the whole Truth in complex matters of Fact, whereby the Depositions may be lame and weak, and carry a quite contrary meaning of the Truth, of what the Witnesses offered to depone; And some of the Witnesses having desired that they might see and read their own Depositions before they subscribed them, the same was absolutely refused, with this Expostulation; *What? do you distrust us? and do you question our Clerk's honesty?* And thus they caused these Witnesses subscribe what was written, so that there may be left out the material parts of their Depositions, which cleared their Minister. And not only are there several Articles of the Libel, which are not upon these Heads, to which the Trial of the Regular Clergy is restricted by Act of Parliament, and which are in themselves *alterius fori*, but likewise there was an additional Libel raised against the said Mr. Alexander, and without any Citation given to him thereupon, or Copy, Sight or Notice given to him thereof; Witnesses are examined, than all which there can be nothing in judicial Procedures more Partial, Pernicious, and Unjust. And Mr. Alexander Heriot having appealed from the Presbytery to the General Assembly, the Presbytery notwithstanding thereof proceeded, and found

the Libel Valid, and Proved; and therefore, and in regard of Mr. Heriot's Contumacy (as they termed his Appeal to the General Assembly, which sat in ~~October~~ last) they suspended him from the Ministry, and referred him for further Censure to the General Assembly. But the General Assembly having found no Contumacy in the Appeal, they referred him back again to the Synod. And now the said Mr. Alexander does again Appeal from the Synod, and from any Sentence they shall give in this Matter, to the next lawful General Assembly, and in the mean time, to Their Majesties Protection for Justice and Relief. For their Grounds and Reasons.

First, There being a Petition given in by the Heritors and Parochiners of *Dalkeith* to the Synod, attesting, the said Mr. Alexander his Faithfulness in the Ministry, and his Innocency as to the things Libelled against him; and craving, that according to the Act of Parliament, the Depositions of the Witnesses might be made patent, that they might be the better Redargued; yet the Synod suffered not the said Petition to be read.

Secondly, The said Mr. Alexander having represented to the Synod the foresaid Procedure of the Presbytery against him, and having craved that the Depositions of the Witnesses might be read before him, and that he might have a Copy of the Additional Libel, which he had never seen; and that conform to the Act of Parliament, the Depositions of the Witnesses might be made patent to him, to the end that he might have a Copy thereof, to the effect he might the better clear himself, from any thing that may seem to be deponed against him; yet notwithstanding thereof, (and contrary to Law) the same was also refused by the Synod, and undoubtedly for this Reason, That the Probation was weak, and might not abide the Light nor Trial, for *Vest. 143. m. quærit Angulus.*

Thirdly, The said Mr. Alexander represented to the Synod, That he was informa-

ed that one of the Articles deposed against him, was, That he should have danced about a Bonfire the 14th of October 1688; And that the same was the only Article proved against him, which he instantly redargued, for the said 14th day of October 1688 fell upon a Sunday, and that the Witnesses and whole Inhabitants of Dalkeith cannot but declare, that there was never Bonfires at Dalkeith upon a Sunday, so that they deposed falsely. And the Dancing about a Bonfire being so publick an Act, that not only the Witnesses that have deposed it, but likewise many others would have seen it, and all the Inhabitants of Dalkeith would have heard of it, if it had been true: Yet notwithstanding thereof, all the Neighbours to that Bonfire, and whole Inhabitants of Dalkeith will declare and depone, that they neither saw nor heard of their Minister dancing at that, or any other Bonfire; yet notwithstanding of that clear Conviction, and redarguing of that Article, the Synod had no regard thereto, affirming that there was no help for it now, it being so deposed, which is no other thing than as if they had said, that they were not concerned tho' it were false, for it was so deposed; and which is so consequential to a clear and positive Redarguing, and Improbation of the Article, and Probation thereof, that the prejudice and design of the Synod to proceed against the said Mr. Alexander upon whatever was alledged, altho' without Probation, or upon a Redargued Probation, is evidently manifest.

4thly. The said Mr. Alexander represented to the Synod, that he had formerly appealed from the Presbytery; and that it was but too evident from what is above narrated, that they were Party against him. And which was further demonstrate from this, That the said Presbytery and Alexander Calderwood, did in face of the Synod not only interrupt the said Mr. Alexander when he was speaking; but likewise debated and reasoned against him as his opposite Parties, so that it could not be expected, but that they would do

more when he was removed out of the Synod, and therefore the said Mr. Alexander declined the Presbytery, and Alexander Calderwood as his Judges, and craved that they might not sit to judge him; yet notwithstanding thereof, against all Law and Justice, they were not removed.

5thly. Several Members of the Synod interrupted the said Mr. Alexander, while he was vindicating himself, in the face of the Synod, and craving a sight of the Additional Libel, and Deposition of the Witnesses; And cried out, That the same should not be granted to him, as if every one of them had had a Decisive Voice, and which is without Example in any Judiciary, for any of the Judges to interrupt the Defenders speaking, and to cry out their Opinion, or rather Sentence, before the Defender be removed; and which openly discovers their Prejudice, Design and Resolution of proceeding against the said Mr. Alexander, altho' without just cause.

6thly. The Prejudice and design of the Synods proceeding against the said Mr. Alexander, on the said lame, weak, and null probation, is evident, in so far as several Members of their Number did speak and deal with him to demit, or that otherways they would depose him. And there is nothing more certain, than that they would never have Dealt with him to demit, if the Probation against him had been good; Their malice to the Regular Clergy being such, as that they would rather Depose them for Immoralities, and Errors in Doctrine, to expose them, than suffer them to Demit, and get off without stain, when they are guilty of the same. But Mr. Alexander being Conscious of his own Innocency refused to Demit, but rather to suffer their Extremity, from which he hoped GOD in his good time would Vindicate him. And therefore it being evident from the Grounds foresaid, that the Synod has behaved themselves most partially, and against all Law and Form: The said Mr. Alexander does therefore protest

Protest against the Synods further Proceeding in the said Matter, and appeals from them, and from any sentence they shall give therein, to the next lawful *General Assembly*, And to their *MAJESTIES* Protection, for Justice, and Relief in the mean time; And Protests, That the said Libels, and Witnesses Depositions taken thereupon, may be preserved, and not put out of the way, That so the same (and not Copies thereof) may be produced to the next *General Assembly*; Or to any their *Majesties* shall be pleased, out of their Royal Authority, to appoint to consider the same: And that as the said Mr. *Alexander* will publish and disperse his Appeal, and his Answers to the first Libel; Which he only did see for his own Vindication from any sentence that shall follow hereupon; So he expects, and earnestly Desires, that the said Synod may Print both the Libels against him, and Depositions taken thereupon, for vindication of their Justice, (if they can conceive they have done right:) But which Mr. *Alexander* hopes will rather vindicate his Innocency. And further, Mr. *Alexander* Craves, and Protests, That this his Appeal may be insert in the Books of the Synod.

Notwithstanding of the Appeals foresaid, the Synod proceeded, and Deposed the said Mr. *Alexander* from his Ministry, and thereupon the Eldership of the Parish was invaded, and some few (severals of them scarce worth to be noticed as *Residenters*) have usurped the power of electing Elders, and have elected many more than the number formerly used, purposely as they think, to make the greater Figure; altho' but of the most inconsiderable of the Parish; and of Design to Call, Impose, and Obtrude a Minister upon the Rest against their will, contrary to the Laws of Charity, Practices of Christian Churches, and profession of Presbyterians. Notwithstanding that the said Mr. *Alexander Heriot* his Appeal does in Law preserve his Right, and keeps all in *statu quo*, the time of the Appeal, while it be discuss.

Whereupon, not only the said Mr. *Alexander Heriot*, but likewise the Heritors and Parishioners of *Dalkeith* have given in a Petition to the Lords of their *Majesties* most Honourable Privy Council, That they may be pleased to forbid the Calling of a Minister until the Appeal be discuss; And that in the mean time, he may be restored to the Exercise of his Ministrie. And that the Presbytery of *Dalkeith*; And others who had the Libels given in against him, and Depositions of the Witnesses, may make the same known to him, as Law appoints; That he may know what is libelled, or may seem to be proved, to the effect he may the better clear himself of the same, which is nothing but false lies and calumnies: And whereof several of the Presbyterian Ministers, who have seen the Libels and Depositions, Affirm, that there is nothing pretended to be proved, But the dancing about the Bon-Fire; which is not only clearly redargued to be false as said is, there being no Bonfires either on the foresaid day, nor for several months either before or after; But likewise if the persons who have deposed it were known, and re-examined, it will be found, they have deposed falsely; And that they have been dealt with so to Depone; And that this Falshood may not be discovered, nor only are the Depositions kept up; contrary to express Law and Acts of Parliament; But likewise, no notice can be gotten who were the persons who have deposed it, that they may be insisted against.

Whereas it is pretended, That the Lords of their *Majesties* Privy Council, are not Judges competent to the sentences of Ecclesiastick Courts, and that as they cannot put in Ministers in Churches, so they cannot meddle with sentences of Depositions. It is answered, That by the 1. *Act 8. Parl. Ja. 6.* It is Statute and Ordained, That his *Majesty*, and Council shall be Judge competent, To all Persons Spiritual and Temporal, in all matters. And so pretend, that the Council is not Judge competent

competent to sentences of Ecclesiastick Courts, & no other then so affirm, That these Courts have an Arbitrary power, and may do wrong at their pleasure without Remedy or Control. For it is evident, That Mr. Herriot is most unjustly pursued and Deposed. And it is also evident, that if it be not Redressed by the Council, he will never be Restored by those Ministers, who have dealt so unjustly with him.

And whereas, it is alleged, That as the Council cannot put in Ministers, so they cannot meddle with sentences of Deposition. It is answered, That the Council has not the power of Admission and Ordination of Ministers. But if a Minister having a lawful Call, the Presbyterie should refuse to admit and Ordain him, albeit they have nothing to object against him, upon Application to the Council or Session, Letters will be directed to Charge the Presbyterie, to Admit and Ordain him, but *multo magis* in this case, where a Minister is Deposed from his Ministrick, as likewise from his Benefice, (which is his Livelyhood and Maintenance) and yet most unjustly, and without Ground or Reason; The Council is most proper Judges, for Restoring him against the forced Oppression, Injurie, and Unjust Sentence.

And for a further evidence of this unjust Sentence, it is Humbly desired, that the Lords of Their Majesties Privy Council will be pleased to take notice, That in the first Libel there are many Articles which are not to be admitted in Law; And it is said, that there is none of them proved, but the Dancing about the Bonfire: And yet the Presbytery by their Sentence, found the Libel Relevant and Proved, which must be understood as to the whole Articles of the Libel complexie, than which there is nothing

more false, as will appear by the Libels and Depositions, if they were produced. And yet thereupon Mr. Herriot is first suspended by the Presbytery, and referred by them to the General Assembly for further Censure, as if great Immoralities in Life, and Errors in Doctrine, had been proved against him. And the Synod (to which the Assembly remitted him) following the steps of the Presbytery, deposed him. Now when Presbytery and Synod, have acted thus contrary to express Law, and have done open and manifest Unjustice; (and whereof all that heard of it are convinced and sensible) And having stated themselves Parties against him, there can be no Remedy expected from the said Unjustice, Injury, and Oppression, unless the Lords of Their Majesties Privy Council interpose their Authority.

If it be alleged, That the late Act of Parliament, The Act of Supremacy in Church matters is Repealed; It is answered, That the Act of Parliament 1669 is Rescinded, which extended the Supremacy, to the Ordering and Disposal of the External Government and Policy of the Church, and to the Enacting of Conflictions, Acts, and Orders in the Church. But the foresaid Act of K. Ja. 6. his 8 Parliament, is not Rescinded, which is only as to the Judging of Ecclesiastick Persons in matters complained upon; and which power is inherent in the Crown, otherways there should be *Regnum in Regno*; and Church Judicatories should have arbitrary Power, without Redress or Control, as said is.

In Regard whereof, The Lords of Their MAJESTIES Privy Council are Judges Competent, to this Injurie, Unjustice and Oppression; And the Desire of the Petitioners ought to be Granted.

*ACT of the General Assembly, anent a Solemn National Fast
and Humiliation, with the Causes thereof.*

At Edinburgh, November 12. 1696. *Postmeridiem, Sess. 25.*

THE General Assembly, Having taken into their most serious Consideration, the late great and general Defection of this Church and Kingdom, have thought fit to Appoint a Day of Solemn Humiliation and Fasting, for Confession of Sins, and making Supplication to our Gracious God, to forgive and remove the guilt thereof: In order, whereunto, they have Ordained the Confession of Sins, and Causes of Fasting following, to be duly Intimated and Published; Recommending it most earnestly to all persons, both Ministers and others, That every one of us may not only search and try our own hearts and ways, and stir up our selves to seek the Lord; But also in our Stations, and as we have access, Deal with one another, in all love and tenderness, to prepare for so great and necessary a Duty, that we may find mercy in God's sight, and He may be graciously reconciled to our Land in our Lord Jesus, and take delight to dwell among us.

Although our gracious God hath of late, for his own Names sake, wrought great and wonderful things, for *Britain and Ireland*, and for this Church and Nation in particular; Yet the Inhabitants thereof have cause to remember their own evil ways, and to loath themselves in their own sight for their Iniquities.

Alas! We, and our Fathers, our Princes, our Pastors, and People of all Ranks have sinned, and have been under great Transgression to this day: For though our gracious God shewed early kindness to this Land, in sending the Gospel amongst us, and afterward in our Reformation from Popish Superstition and Idolatry; and it had the Honour, beyond many Nations, of being after our

first Reformation, solemnly devoted unto God, both Prince and People, yet we have dealt treacherously with the Lord, and been unstedfast in his Covenant, and have not walked suitably to our Mercies received from him, nor obligations to him: Through the mercy of God this Church had attained to a great purity of Doctrine, Worship, and Government, but this was not accompanied with suitable personal Reformation, neither was our Fruit answerable to the pains taken on us by Word and Work; We had much Gospel-preaching, but too little Gospel-practice; too many went on in open wickedness, and some had but a form of Godliness, denying the power thereof; many also who had the Grace of God in truth fell from their first love, and fell under sad languishings and decays; and when for our sins the anger of the Lord had divided us, and we were brought under the feet of strangers, and many of our Brethren killed, others taken Captive and sold as slaves, yet we sinned still, and after we were freed from the yoke of strangers, instead of returning to the Lord, and being led to Repentance by his goodness, the Land made open Defection from the good ways of the Lord: many behaved as if they had been delivered to work abomination, the flood-gates of Impiety were opened, and a deluge of wickedness did over-spread the Land. Who can without grief and shame remember the shameful debauchery and drunkenness that then was? And this accompanied with horrid and hellish cursing and swearing, and followed with frequent Filchiness, Adulteries, and other Abominations, and the Reprover was hated, and he that departed from Iniquity made himself a reproach or prey.

prey. And when by these, and such like corrupt practices, mens Consciences were debauched, they proceeded to sacrifice the Interest of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Priviledges of his Church to the lusts and will of men; The Supremacy was advanced in such a way, and to such an height, as never any Christian Church acknowledged; the Government of the Church was altered, and Prelacy (which hath been always grievous to this Nation) introduced, without the Churches consent, and contrair to the standing Acts of our National Assemblies, both which the present Parliament hath (blessed be God) lately found; And yet nevertheless, of the then standing Ministry of Scotland, many did suddenly and readily comply with that alteration of the Government, some out of Pride and Covetousness or Man-pleasing, some through infirmity or weakness, or fear of Man, and want of Courage and Zeal for God; many faithful Ministers were thereupon cast out, and many Insufficient and Scandalous men thrust in on their Charges, and many Families ruined, because they would not own them as their Pastors.

And alas! it is undeniable, there hath been under the late Prelacie, a great decay of Piety, so that it was enough to make a man be nicknam'd a Phanatick, if he did not run to the same excess of riot with others.

And should it not be lamented, for it cannot be denied, there hath been in some a dreadful Atheistical Boldness against God, some have disputed the Being of God; and his Providence, the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, the Life to come, and Immortality of the Soul, yea and scoffed at these things.

There hath been also an horrid Prophanation of the Holy and Dreadful Name of God, by Cursing and Swearing: Ah! there hath been too much Swearing and Forswearing amongst us, that no Nation under Heaven have been more guilty in this than we; some by swearing rashly or ignorantly, some falsely, by breaking their Oaths, and imposing and taking

ungodly and unlawful Oaths and Bonds whereby the Consciences of many have been polluted and feared, and many ruined and oppressed for refusing and not taking them.

There hath also been a great neglect of the Worship of God, too much in publick, but especially in Families, and in secret.

The wonted care of Religious sanctifying the Lord's Day is gone, and in many places the Sabbath hath been, and is shamefully prophaned.

The Land also hath been full of bloody Crimes, and Cities full of Violence, and much innocent Blood shed, so that Blood touched Blood; yea, *Sadoms* sins have abounded amongst us, Pride, fullness of Bread, Idleness, Vanities of Apparel, and shameful sensuality filled the Land.

And alas! how great hath been the Cry of Oppression, and Unrighteousness, Iniquity hath been established by a Law, there hath been a great perverting of Justice, by making and executing unrighteous Statutes and Acts, and sad persecutions of many for their Conscience towards God.

It is also matter of Lamentation, that under this great Defection there hath been too general a fainting, not only amongst professors of the Gospel, but also amongst Ministers; yea, even amongst such, who in the main things did endeavour to maintain their Integrity, in not giving seasonable and necessary Testimony against the Defections and Evils of the Time, and keeping a due distance from them, and some on the other hand managed their Zeal with too little Discretion and Meekness.

It is also matter of Humiliation, that when Differences fell out amongst these, who did owne Truth, and bear witness against the Course of Defection, they were not managed with due Charity and Love, but with too much heat and bitterness, injurious Reflections used against pious and worthy men on all hands, and scandalous Divisions occasioned, and the success of the Gospel greatly obstructed thereby,

thereby, and some dangerous Principles drunk in: And after all this, there were shameful advances towards Popery, the Abomination of the Mass was set up in many places, and Popish Schools erected, and severals fell to Idolatry.

And though the Lord hath put a stop to the Course of Defection, and of his great mercy given us some reviving from our Bondage; yet we have sad cause to regrave and bemoan, that few have a due sense of our mercy, or walk answerable thereto, few are turned to the Lord in truth, but the wicked go on to do wickedly, and there is found amongst us to this day shameful ingratitude for our mercies, Horrid impenitency under our sins, yea, even amongst those who stand most up for the Defence of the Truth: and amongst many in our Armies, there is woful Prophaneness and Debauchery. And though we profess to acknowledge, there can be no pardon of Sins, no Peace and Reconciliation with God, but by the Blood of Jesus Christ; yet few know Him, or see the Necessity and Excellency of the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; few see their need of Him, or esteem, desire, or receive Him, as he is offered in the Gospel; few are acquainted with Faith in Jesus Christ, and living by Faith on Him, as made of the Father unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption; and few walk as becometh the Gospel, and imitate our Holy Lord in Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Heavenly-mindedness, Zeal for GOD, and Charity towards Men: But as there is even until now, a great contempt of the Gospel, a great Barrenness under it; so a deep Security under our Sin and Danger, a great want of Piety toward God, and Love towards Men, with a woful Selfishness, every one seeking their own things, few the things of Christ, or the publick Good, or one anothers welfare: And finally, the most part more ready to censure the sins of others, than to repent of their own.

Our Iniquities are increased over our heads, and our Trespases are grown up

into the Heavens, they are many in number, and hainous in their nature, and grievously aggravated, as having been contrair to great Light and Love, under signal Mercies and Judgments, after Confession and Supplication, and notwithstanding of our Profession, Promises and solemn Vowing, and Covenanting with God to the contrair.

Have we not then sad cause of deep Sorrow and Humiliation? And may we not fear, if we do not repent, and turn from the evil of our ways, and return to the Lord with all our hearts, that He return to do us evil, after he hath done us good, and be angry with us, until He hath consumed us?

Let us therefore humble our selves by Fasting and Praying, let us search out our sins, and consider our ways, and confess these, and other our sins, with Sorrow and Detestation; Let us turn unto the Lord with Fasting and weeping, and with mourning; Let us firmly Resolve and sincerely Engage to amend our ways and doings, and return unto the Lord our God, with all our heart, and earnestly pray, that for the blood of the Lamb of God, our sins may be forgiven, and our back-slidings healed, and we may yet become a righteous Nation, keeping the Truth, that Religion and Righteousness may flourish, and Love, and Charity abound, and all the Lord's People may be of one mind in the Lord: and in order to all these, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, and that the Preaching of the Word, and Dispensing of the Sacraments, may be accompanied with the wonted presence, Power and Blessing of the Spirit of the Lord; That the Lord would preserve and bless our gracious King and Queen, William and Mary, and establish their Throne by Righteousness and Religion, and grant to these Nations, Peace and Truth together; and for that End, bless and prosper His Majesties Councils, and Forces by Sea and Land, and those of the Princes and States his Allies, for God and his Truth, that Inferior Rulers may rule

rule in the fear of God, and Judges be clothed with Righteousness, and that many faithful Labourers may be sent out into the Lord's Vineyard, and they who are sent, may find mercy to be faithful, and be blest with Success, that Families may be as little Churches of Christ, and that the Lord would pour out His Spirit on all Ranks of People, that they may be holy in all manner of Conversation, and God may delight to dwell amongst us, and to do us good.

And while we pray for our selves, let us not forget our Brethren in Forreign Churches, with whom, alas! we had too little Sympathy; Nay, let us pray, that all the ends of the Earth, may see the Salvation of God; and that He would bring his ancient people of the *Jews* to the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ; and that he would hasten the ruine of Romish Babylon, and advance the Reformation in Christendome, and preserve and bless the Reformed Churches; That he would pity His oppressed People, the *French Protestants*, and gather them out of all places, whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day; and that he would be the Defence, Strength and Salvation of any of his People, who are in War or Danger by Infidel or Popish adversaries, in *Europe* or *America*. And in particular, that the Lord would be Gracious to *Ireland*, and sanctifie to his People there, both their distress and deliverance; and perfect what concerneth them, that he would convert the Natives there to the Truth, and re-

duce that Land to Peace; and appoint Salvation for Walls and Bulwarks to *Britain*.

For all these Causes and Reasons, The General Assembly hath appointed the Second Thursday of *January* next, to be Observed in all the Congregations of the Church and Nation, as a day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation, and Prayer, Beseeching and Obtesting all, both Pastors, and People of all Ranks to be sincere and serious, in Humiliation and Supplication, and universal Reformation, as they would wish to find mercy of the Lord, and have deserved wrath averted, and would obtain the Blessing of the Lord upon themselves and Posterity after them; and that the Lord may delight in us, and our Land may be as Married to him. And Ordains all Ministers, either in Kirks or Meeting houses, to read this present Act publicly from the Pulpit, a Sabbath or two before the said Day of Humiliation: and that the several Presbyteries take care, that it be carefully Observed in their respective bounds. And where, in regard of Vacancies, the Day hereby appointed, cannot be observed, the Assembly appoints the said Humiliation, to be kept some other Day with the first convenient opportunity: And appoints the Commission for Visitation, to apply to the Council, for their Civil Sanction to the Observation thereof. *Extrall'd out of the Records of Assembly,* by

JO. SPALLING. Clk. Syn.
National.

A PROCLAMA-

A PROCLAMATION

Anent a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation.

WILLIAM and MARY,
by the Grace of God, King
and Queen of Great Britain,
France, and Ireland, De-
fenders of the Faith: To

Masters of our Privy Council,
or Messengers at Arms, our Sheriffs in that
part, Conjunctly and Federally, specially com-
mitted, Greeting: Forasmuch, as the Gene-
ral Assembly of this Church, by their Act,
of the date the twelfth day of November
instant, hath appointed a Solemn National
Fast and Humiliation, to be Observed in all
the Kirks and Meeting-Houses of this Our
Ancient Kingdom; and appointed their Com-
mission for Visitation, to apply to the Lords of
Our Privy Council, for Our Civil Sanction,
to be interposed thereto; And they having
Applied accordingly: Therefore We, with
Advice of the Lords of our Privy Council, Do
hereby Command and Enjoin, That the said
Solemn Fast and Humiliation be Religiously
observed, by all Persons throughout this
Kingdom, both in Kirks and Meeting-Houses,
at the Dyets, and in the manner as by the
above-mentioned Act of Assembly, hereto pre-
fixed, is appointed; And that the same be
read by all the Ministers, in manner therein
mentioned. And to the end that so Pious and
necessary a Duty may be punctually performed,
and Our Pleasure in the Premises fully
known: Our Will is therefore, and We Charge
you straitly, and Command, that incontinent

ther: Our Letters seen, ye pass to the Mer-
cat-Cross of Edinburgh, and the remanent
Mercat-Crosses of the Head-Burghs of the
several Shires and Stewartries, within this
Kingdom, and in Our Name and Authority,
make Publication of the Premises, that none
may pretend ignorance. And we do Ordain
Our Solicitor to dispatch Copies hereof to
the Sheriffs of the several Shires and Stew-
arts of the Stewartries, or their Deputes, or
Clerks, to be by them Published at the Mer-
cat-Crosses of the Head-Burghs, upon re-
ceipt thereof, and immediately sent to the
several Ministers, both in Kirks and Meet-
ing-Houses, to the effect they may read and
intimate the same from their Pulpits, and
may seriously exhort all Persons, to a sincere
and devout observance thereof, as they Re-
gard the Favour and Blessings of the Al-
mighty God, the Safety and Preservation of
both Church and State, and would avoid
the Wrath of God upon themselves and their
Posterity, and as they will be answerable at
their perill. And Ordains these Presents to
be Printed with the said Act of Assembly,
and these Presents to be Published in man-
ner foresaid.

Given under Our Signet at Edinburgh,
the twenty first day of November,
And of Our Reign, the second
year, 1690.

Per actum Dominorum S^{ci}. Concilii.
GILB. ELIOT, Ch. S^{ci}. Concilii.

God Save King, WILLIAM, and Queen MARY.

Edinburgh, Printed by the Heir of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to the
King and Queens most Excellent Majesties. 1690.

F I N I S.

